

EFFECTIVE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS IN PARLIAMENTS:

A CASE STUDY OF NEW ZEALAND IN THEORETICAL AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS	PAGE
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
List of Appendices	vii
Abbreviations	viii
Acknowledgement	ix
Abstract	x
CHAPTER ONE: A QUEST FOR BARRIERS, POLITICAL REPRESENTATION, EFFECTIVENESS AND POWER	1
1.1 Problems in levels of women's representation	1
1.2 Regional variation of women's representation	4
1.3 Political Representation	8
1.3.1 Theories of representation	9
1.4 Political Effectiveness	20
1.5 Project profile	27
1.6 Research design/Methodology	31
1.7 Secondary sources	33
1.8 Structure of the thesis	34
CHAPTER TWO: BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION AND EFFECTIVENESS AND SOURCES OF POWER	36
2.1 General societal barriers	36
2.1.1 Reproductive roles	36
2.1.2 Private versus public roles	38
2.1.2.1 Sources of stereotypes	40
2.1.2.1.1 Socialisation as a source of stereotypes	41
2.1.2.1.2 Popular attitudes	42
2.1.3 Cultural factors	46
2.1.4 Religious factors	47
2.2 Sources of power	52

2.2.1	Sources of individual power	55
2.2.1.1	Resource power	55
2.2.1.2	Position power	59
2.2.1.3	Expert power	59
	2.2.1.3.1 Education	62
	2.2.1.3.2 Professional occupations and labour market participation	63
2.2.1.4	Personal power	64
	2.2.1.4.1 Family connections	66
2.2.2	Sources of group power	67
2.2.2.1	Quotas and reserved seats in political parties and legislatures	69
2.2.2.2	Network/pressure groups/women's movement	72
2.2.3	Sources of institutional power	74
2.2.3.1	Political parties and caucuses	74
2.2.3.2	Electoral systems	79
2.2.4	Sources of structural power	80
2.2.4.1	Democracy	81
2.2.4.2	Socio-economic condition of the nation	82
2.3	Summary and conclusion	84
CHAPTER THREE: WOMEN LEGISLATORS' POWER AND EFFECTIVENESS IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD		86
3.1	Visible differences between male and female MPs	86
3.1.1	Reproductive roles make women less effective	86
3.1.2	They are different from men in exercising power	88
3.1.3	They are less aggressive	89
3.1.4	They serve in the softer portfolios	91
3.1.5	They show specific issue preferences	95
	3.1.5.1 Single-issue legislators	98
	3.1.5.2 Multiple issues legislators	101
	3.1.5.3 Legislators who avoid women's issues	103
3.2	Sources of women's power and effectiveness	108
3.3	Summary and conclusion	112

CHAPTER FOUR: SOCIETAL BARRIERS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN THE NEW ZEALAND PARLIAMENT	114
4.1 Gender in New Zealand	115
4.1.1 Cultural factors	116
4.1.1.1 Power in gender relations	116
4.1.1.2 Reproductive roles	119
4.1.1.3 Socialisation processes	122
4.1.1.4 Division of private and public spheres	128
4.1.1.5 People's negative attitudes	134
4.1.1.5.1 Negative attitudes in the parliament	139
4.1.1.5.2 Aggressiveness and power	141
4.1.2 Religion	142
4.2 Summary and conclusion	146
 CHAPTER FIVE: BARRIERS TO THE EFFECTIVENESS AND POWER OF WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN THE NEW ZEALAND PARLIAMENT	 149
5.1 Representation	150
5.2 Sources of individual power	152
5.2.1 Resource power through select committees	152
5.2.2 Position power through cabinet positions	155
5.2.2.1 Local government as a stepping-stone	156
5.2.3 Expert power through education and professional occupations	159
5.2.3.1 Education	159
5.2.3.2 Professional occupations	160
5.2.4 Personal power	163
5.2.4.1 Personal power and family connections	164
5.3 Sources of group power	166
5.3.1 Women's/feminists' organisations and networks	166
5.4 Sources of institutional power	178
5.4.1 Party activities and partisan nature of New Zealand women	178
5.4.1.1 Trade union involvement	187
5.4.2 Electoral systems	191
5.5 Sources of structural power	193

5.5.1	Democracy	193
5.5.2	Socio-economic condition	194
5.6	Summary and conclusion	195
 CHAPTER SIX: ANALYSIS OF PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS/INEFFECTIVENESS OF WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN NEW ZEALAND		 198
6.1	Male MPs' opinion	198
6.2	Personal interviews of female MPs	205
6.3	Summary and conclusion	234
 CHAPTER SEVEN: CONTEXTUALIZING THE RESULTS: WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN NORWAY AND BANGLADESH		 237
7.1	Gender in Bangladesh and Norway	237
7.2	Women's effective representation	248
7.2.1	Sources of individual power (resource/position/expert)	248
7.2.2	Personal power	256
7.2.3	Sources of group power	260
7.2.4	Sources of institutional power	269
7.2.4.1	Political parties	269
7.2.4.2	Electoral systems	277
7.3	Sources of structural power	278
7.3.1	Democracy	278
7.3.2	Socio-economic conditions	280
7.4	Summary and conclusion	281
 CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION		 286
8.1	Barriers to participation and effectiveness	287
8.1.1	General societal barriers	287
8.1.2	Women's access difficulty to sources of legislative power	291
8.2	Are women effective representatives?	303
8.3	Contribution of the work	308
 REFERENCES		 311
APPENDIX		341

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES	PAGE
1.1 Women's parliamentary representation in seven global regions	4
2.1 Common extrapolations from domestic roles to political interests	39
2.2 Sources of power extracted from available literature	54
3.1 Gender based portfolio allocation	92
3.2 Portfolios held by women before their chief executive position	93
4.1 Women's role according to equalitarian and traditional views	120
4.2 Subject choice of male and female students	123
4.3 Gender gap in political interest (%)	126
4.4 Interest in politics (%)	126
4.5 Knowledge of the MMP system by gender (%)	126
4.6 Women MPs' interests	131
4.7 New Zealand people's affiliation to religious denominations	144
5.1 Women MPs in select committees of 46 th parliament	154
5.2 Women MPs used local government positions as stepping-stones	158
5.3 Women MPs' family connections	165
5.4 Women MPs' involvement in women's organisations and networks	172
5.5 Women MPs with trade union experience	187
5.6 Party based seat allocation in the 1999-2002 parliament and women's share	190
5.7 Women, Maori and ethnic communities' representation in the parliament	192
6.1 Gender gap in select committees	218
6.2 Women MPs' issue choice	221
6.3 Portfolios held by Prime Ministers of New Zealand before first becoming Prime Ministers	226
7.1 Religious denominations in Bangladesh	240
7.2 Major religious denominations in Norway	245
7.3 Background of women MPs in the Bangladesh parliament	254
7.4 Women's representation in the Bangladesh parliament (1973-2001)	265
7.5 Effect of quota in political parties	269
7.6 Women in political parties' central executive committees	276

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES	PAGE
4.1 Level of confidence in political parties	127
5.1 Bachelor degrees held by men and women	160

LIST OF APPENDIX

APPENDIX	PAGE
A Perceptions of female members of parliament among male members of parliament	341

ABBREVIATIONS

AL	Awami League
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BNP	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
CCWI	Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
CNN	Cable News Network
CWW	Committee on Women's Work
DPB	Domestic Purposes Benefit
EC	European Community
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
FEMA	Fair Election Monitoring Alliance
FPP	First-Past-the-Post
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
ICW	International Council of Women
IDEA	Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
JIB	Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh
JP	Jatio Party
MMP	Mixed Member Proportional
NCW	National Council of Women
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NOW	National Organisation of Women
NOW	National Organization of Women
NZES	New Zealand Election Surveys
PPP	Pakistan People's Party
PR	Proportional Representation
PSA	Public Service Association
PSC	Public Service Commission
SROW	Society for Research On Women
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WCTU	Woman's Christian Temperance Union
WDF	Women's Divisions of Federated Farmers
WEL	Women's Electoral Lobby
WID	Women In Development
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

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ABSTRACT

Barriers to women's effective representation are examined along two main dimensions. Firstly, barriers are identified that hinder women's legislative participation and secondly, barriers are identified against women's effective representation. Effectiveness is the ability to exercise power to make an impact. But the sources of power that leads to effectiveness may sometimes remain inadequately accessible to women. Barriers to participation and barriers to effectiveness are interrelated. Broadly barriers can be classified as societal, institutional and structural. However, women legislators of some countries are quite successful in overcoming those barriers. A number of hypotheses regarding barriers, effective parliamentary representation, conducive systems and strategies are tested through this empirical research.

Representation itself is a contested principle of political science. Women's political representation is even more controversial. Legislative representatives are expected to serve primarily their political parties. But the expectation that women legislators should be the representatives of women as a group contradicts other theories of political representation. While some women legislators follow this guideline of representing women by focusing only on certain issues, their activities are often seen as stereotypical and their effectiveness is questioned. This limits women legislators' ability to fulfil their other representative roles such as political parties, constituencies and the whole nation.

New Zealand was selected as a case study to assess women legislators' effectiveness as representatives. This is analysed in terms of four indicators: cabinet positions, select committee assignments, speaking ability, and overall reputation. *Event* and *reputational*, two types of indicators of power, have been used to assess power and effectiveness. Cabinet positions and committee assignments seem countable and *event*-based but lobbying and speaking are more susceptible to *reputational* indicators. The individual legislator cannot be assessed easily on an *event*-based assessment because most of the legislative outcomes are group decisions. Therefore, along with *event*, the *reputational* approach has been used to supplement the understanding of effectiveness.

Primary research was conducted in two different formats, namely, a mail questionnaire for male MPs, and personal interviews for female MPs. Out of 37 women MPs 22 were interviewed and out of 40 targeted male MPs 34 responded to the study. A brief comparison of the findings of the New Zealand case was undertaken with two other countries, Norway and Bangladesh. The comparison was designed based on contemporary literature that proposes that both barriers to participation and barriers to effectiveness vary from culture to culture.

This case study of New Zealand women MPs' effective participation and representation reveals that women legislators are effective in performing selective legislative tasks such as gaining cabinet positions and select committee assignments. Their speaking ability and overall good reputation are also noteworthy. Although some trace of stereotypes is evident in taking social welfare tasks by women legislators, a majority of them are not confined to any such areas. The study concludes that the representation of party is the legislators' prime task whether male or female and that by using the party platform, women can be effective both as legislative and women's representatives.

CHAPTER ONE

A QUEST FOR BARRIERS, POLITICAL REPRESENTATION, EFFECTIVENESS AND POWER

1.1 Problems in levels of women's representation

Underrepresentation of women in almost every policymaking aspect of life is a global issue. Nowhere in the world are women represented in government in proportion to their population. On average, irrespective of region and culture, the rate of women's advancement and representation in decision-making positions has been very slow. The United Nations (UN) has estimated that women would have to wait until the year 2490 to reach the equal representation stage with men in higher echelons of power based on the current rate of change (Seager, 1997, p. 70). For instance, women's representation in many legislatures, the most powerful institutions of democratic nations, is almost token as from 1945 to 2002 it increased from 3% to only 14.7% (IPU, 2002a). Moreover, the gradual increase in the number of women entering parliament is not reflected in cabinets, as among 180 nation-states, only 8.7% of cabinet ministers were women in July 1999 (Reynolds, 1999, p. 562). The number of elected chief executives was lower still. Capdevila (2000, pp. 3&4) reported that in mid-1999, only 3.7% of the world's heads of state were women, and women prime ministers made up only 1.6% of all prime ministers. So what hinders women's legislative representation?

Some key aspects of this research are addressed throughout this chapter. The first attempt is a search for barriers to women's underrepresentation in legislatures. The chapter then defines the term political representation, addresses the popular theories of political representation and examines the relationship of power and effectiveness with representation. Some indicators are suggested to assess effectiveness. A few hypotheses and several research questions are generated through this discussion. The last part is composed of the research design and the structure of the thesis.

One broadly accepted cause of women's legislative underrepresentation is that barriers remain in the path of women's advancement. The literal meaning of barrier is a fence or rails that bar advance or prevent access. But the nature of the barriers that create obstacles to women's representation can be compared with a circumstance that prevents

progress or communication.¹ Barriers can be both visible and invisible. For example, 'glass ceiling' is a metaphor for prejudice and discrimination that interferes with women's ability as potential leaders and managers. This is also viewed as a natural consequence of gender stereotypes and the expectation of the same behavioural pattern as male leaders (Carli and Eagly, 2001, p. 631; Heilman, 2001, p. 657; Ridgeway, 2001, p. 637). It is also the tendency to interpret the same behaviour differently when the actors are of different sexes. For example, the statement that women may wait to make a decision whilst men are more likely to act immediately, can then be used to portray women as passive and men as prudent.

A significant element of women's passive image is contributed by the political writings found in the literature. Political scientists such as Robert Lane (1959) and Robert Dahl (1961) downplayed women's political capability by stating that women are apolitical and peculiar and that women's activities are more social or personal; women are passive in politics and so on. Not only these scholars but Lovenduski (1992, p. 603) argued that before the emergence of the Women's Liberation Movement in the 1960s, discussion on women in political discourse portrayed women as surrogates of men and inferior. Based on prejudice, women were viewed as politically less interested and incompetent in a male dominated political profession. This passive image of women is another example of an invisible barrier resulting in a glass ceiling.

The critics have also found a blend of visible barriers leading to women's underrepresentation. These are women's responsibilities for family and children; demarcation of private and public spheres; different socialisation processes for men and women; the negative attitudes and discrimination of political parties; conservative religious and cultural doctrines; discriminatory socio-economic conditions; electoral systems; the nature of a regime and financial barriers (Rule, 1994a, 1994b; Liswood, 1999; Reynolds, 1999; Carli and Eagly, 2001; Goetz, 2001; Harris, 2001). However, depending on the nature of the society and the structure of political culture and government, the extent of these barriers varies from state to state. This leads to a need to examine the extent of barriers in different nation states.

As women's underrepresentation is a critical issue world-wide, many countries, developed or developing, are struggling with the thorny problem of how to increase

¹ See The Hutchinson Encyclopedic Dictionary, 1991, p. 88.

representation of those segments of society whose participation has been minimal in the past. Critics have seen women's absence from national legislatures as falling short of full democracy. With the fall of the communist regimes of the Soviet Union and Eastern European bloc in the early 1990s, women's parliamentary representation dropped significantly. This is one of the reasons for increased international attention to the issue of women in public decision-making (Sawer, 1999, p. 8). A wide range of national, regional and international bodies such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and the UN, included this issue in their agendas. For example, as of 1998, 163 countries had ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Today women's participation is deemed necessary in modern democracy because adequate representation is regarded as essential for democratic government. The IPU's prescription of democracy asserts that:

The concept of democracy will only assume true and dynamic significance when political policies and national legislation are decided upon jointly by men and women with equitable regard for the interests and aptitudes of both halves of the population.²

However, while numerical representation is essential for democratic reasons, it may not ensure performance. The presence of more women in the parliament does not mean they are effective representatives; indeed women's effectiveness is questioned often (Sapiro, 1983; Liswood, 1999). What causes one woman to be an effective legislator and another one to be ineffective? Kirkpatrick's (1974, p. 108) assertion is noteworthy:

To be an effective legislator it is never enough to be elected. Each legislator must win a place and a name for herself, establish her credibility and her authority.

Establishing credibility and authority may not occur as easily as they are stated. The factors affecting women's numerical and effective representation may be the same elements as those identified as barriers. Therefore, understanding the barriers to women's participation and effectiveness is crucial. We must be concerned not only with effectiveness but also with barriers to effectiveness and possible measures to overcome those barriers.

² In April 1992, in Yaoundé, the IPU Council first stated this concept 'An Approach to Democracy'. For detail see the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU, 2002b) at <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/approach.htm>

1.2 Regional variation of women's representation

Variation in women's representation has not only appeared in different grades and at different levels of leadership but also in different regions, with Arab and Nordic states at the extreme as is demonstrated in table 1.1. Dr Karin Klenke, President & CEO, Leadership Development Institute (LDI) International, established connections between the specific contextual factors framed by the culture of a given country and the emergence of women in politics. In her book *'Women and Leadership: A Contextual Perspective'* 1996, she argued that contextual factors are cultural characteristics that produce differences in women's political leadership and advancement. These contexts may be political, historical, social, religious, military or technological. Each context generates different assumptions and produces different criteria, which are used in the evaluation of politicians' performance and effectiveness.

Table 1.1. Women's parliamentary representation in seven global regions³

Region	Average percentage of women in national legislatures
Nordic countries	39.9
Europe (excluding Nordic countries)	15.1
Americas	16.4
Asia	14.9
Sub-Saharan Africa	13.5
Pacific	15.2
Arab States	4.7

Culture produces a distinctive identity for a society. It includes religion, kinship structures and language and their operating systems in nation states. Culture also socialises its members into greater internal homogeneity and identifies outsiders. It is thus treated as a differentiating concept that provides factors for the recognition of internal cohesion and external discrimination.⁴ Klenke (1996, p. 23) claimed that gender is an inherent part of culture because culture determines the identity of a human group. It also dominates the everyday interactions and allocates tasks to men and women within a society. Often it gives the two genders different responsibilities. Differences along gender lines may vary from culture to culture. From birth, boy and girl children grow up in a different socialisation process that may have a significant impact on their behaviour in later life. The task allocation of men and women in the public and private spheres respectively is probably one of the best examples of a

³ See the IPU, 2002a at <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm> as of 20 September 2002.

⁴ See Borgatta and Montgomery, 2000, pp. 562-69.

cultural outcome (Norris and Inglehart, 2000). Women legislators' effectiveness may be largely affected by this influential element of culture.

However, culture is also considered a dynamic social agent. It may change within a society over time. It is often said that some aspects of Western culture have become embedded in many Third World countries (Randall, 1987; Saxena, 1989). Women may win greater political representation in nations where more liberal attitudes toward the role of women in politics prevail. While most research on gender inequality in political representation has pointed out that political, socio-economic and cultural factors each play a role in accounting for cross-national variation, culture remains the most influential factor irrespective of whether a country is developed or developing, Western and Third World countries (Moore and Shackman, 1996; Paxton, 1997; Matland, 1998b; Kenworthy and Malami, 1999). For example, an egalitarian culture renders the environment more favourable for women's political representation in Scandinavia and for this achievement Karvonen and Selle, (1995, p. 11) named Nordic societies as 'women-friendly'.

Both Klenke (1999) and Reynolds (1999) made a particular effort to show the significant cultural differences both between regions and within regions. For example, Europe is a collection of diverse countries where national sovereignty remains strong but centuries old cultures have marked differences. Substantial differences appeared between the representational rate of Norwegian (36.4%) and French (12.3%) women, for example. Norway in particular, and the other Scandinavian countries, maintain a strong commitment to egalitarian values.

The Americas region includes USA, Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean. As of the year 2002 the region has two women heads of state. Despite the relatively liberal culture and prosperous situation of the USA, women's percentage in the Congress is only 14%. In contrast, women's share of administrative and managerial positions is over 45% in the USA. Latin America has another set of contextual and cultural determinants. A gender identity system known as *machismo* is prevalent in Latin American countries and refers to an exaggerated maleness with aggression, heroism, dominance and authority. In contrast, their female counterparts are known as *marianismo*, a stereotype that promotes the worship of the Virgin Mary and has been

described as the 'cult of female superiority'⁵. Despite these cultural proscriptions, Costa Rica produced the highest number of women in its legislature in the Americas region. In 2002 Costa Rica achieved 5th global position with 35.1% women in its parliament. Thus there may be some causes other than culture for women's generally low representation.

As with the other regions, women's political leadership in Asia is influenced by unique and specific socio-cultural factors, which are part of the heritage and traditions of this region. The Asian region has considerable diversity across countries in terms of language, history, customs, and industrial development. For example, in India women are constitutionally equal to men, but are culturally defined as being primarily responsible for the children and the home.

Religion is another significant element that influences traditional culture and is thought to be responsible for women's subordinate roles in society (Reynolds, 1999). Three strongly religious countries in Asia however, show variation in women's representation. India, a Hindu dominated country has only 8.8% representation. Among the predominantly Islamic countries in Asia, Malaysia has the highest number of women in its parliament at 10.4%. The Philippines, another strongly religious nation with Christianity/Catholicism prevalent has 17.8%, which is significantly better than other strongly religious countries in Asia. Vietnam and China, on the other hand, are societies with Confucian philosophy that promotes male superiority. By maintaining the traditional tokenism of communist regimes, Vietnam and China produced the highest percentage of women in their parliaments; 27.3% and 21.8%, respectively. Overall, most of the Asian countries have lived under patriarchal systems of gender relations and sanctioned the culturally defined domestic role for women. Despite these apparent cultural constraints, Asia has produced the most women heads of state and in 2002 had four, the highest among the seven regions.

Post colonial Sub-Saharan Africa is generally a male preserve. In addition to male resistance, women's advancement is restrained by social and cultural fragmentation. Women's political marginalisation is also an outcome of class, ethnic and religious

⁵ This "cult" teaches that women are semi-divine, morally superior and spiritually stronger than men, and that women should exhibit patience, humility, sacrifice and submissiveness to the demands of men and conform to the behaviours prescribed as gender appropriate by *marianismo*. See Klenke, 1999, p. 139.

divisions (Haynes, 1996, p. 167). However, some countries in this region advanced significantly in terms of women's political representation. For instance, Mozambique and South Africa achieved the 10th and 11th global position with 30% and 29.8% of women in their parliaments. A wealthier economy may be a factor here but Rwanda's 25.7% representation of women is another significant outcome, which cannot be related to a better economy.

Although considerable variability and diversity appear across the countries of the Pacific Rim, patriarchal communalism is the predominant gender role characteristic of this region (Reynolds, 1999, p. 551). While all other Pacific nations show a poor representation of women in their parliaments, New Zealand and Australia appeared as exceptions with 30.8% and 25.3% respectively.⁶ Western democracy may play a significant role in these two exceptions, which needs to be examined.

Cultural differences are often drawn from a strict religious inclination as we may observe in some states. The poor parliamentary representation of women in Arab states is thought to be due to the cultural norms of Islam restraining women's economic and political activities through *purdah* or ritual seclusion, which is visible as a dress code (Haynes, 1996, p. 165; Reynolds, 1999, p. 551). Some of the Islamic states in this region have no women in their parliaments, such as the United Arab Emirates. Kuwait is more extreme: it does not even allow women to vote. Only the non-Islamic state of Israel has shown significantly better performance with 13.3% representation of women in their Knesset (parliament) within the predominantly Islamic Arab region. However, the Islamic dominated states of Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa regions show three times better representation of women than Arab states. This may be an indication that religious doctrines and interpretations are not equally important to every nation. The specific impact of culture and religion on women's political participation and effectiveness is discussed in chapter two.

Thus culture, political parties, electoral systems, nature of the regime and other barriers can hinder women's legislative participation and effectiveness. This gives rise to the hypothesis that:

⁶ At the latest general election in New Zealand held in July 2002 women's parliamentary representation decreased from 30.8% to 28.2%. This study deals with the previous 1999-02 parliament and its 30.8% representation of women.

Specific barriers hinder women's legislative participation and effectiveness.

Further discussion of the specific barriers is undertaken in chapter two as part of the overall study of women's effective representation. Thus there is also a need to discuss political representation, political effectiveness and power.

1.3 Political Representation

Political representation is a complex concept and its meaning is contested. McLean (1991, p. 172) claimed that "representation is one of the slippery core concepts of political theory." However, Pitkin (1967), a pioneer of the theory of representation, stated that in representation something not present is considered as present in a non-literal sense. Referring to *political representation* in particular, she mentioned that it is:

primarily a public, institutionalized arrangement involving many people and groups, and operating in the complex ways of large-scale social arrangements (Pitkin, 1967, p. 221).

Representation is a relationship through which an individual or group stands for, or acts on behalf of, a larger body of people. It is representation if the people of a constituency are involved in governmental action, even if they do not literally act for themselves. Although some disagreement appears regarding the meaning of representation, there is broad agreement that representatives maintain relationships with groups and persons both inside and outside legislatures and this relationship contains elements of power and authority. Representatives carry with them the political rights, powers and duties of those who have constituted them as such. In every kind of government, power must exist and be placed in trust and the individual representatives are the trustees authorised by the nation (Fairlie, 1940a; Friedrich, 1949; Hobbes, 1958; Mayo, 1960; Eulau, 1962a; Pitkin, 1967, Joseph, 1988; Heywood, 1997).

However, representatives' power is not unlimited. An elected representative cannot be free from the usual responsibility for his or her actions. Political scientists believe that both responsibility and accountability should be integral components of representation. As Birch (1964, p. 15) put it:

It would seem that elected persons can be described as representatives only if their elections involves some obligation, however slight, to advance the interests and opinions of their electors.

The importance of representatives' obligation is also evident when Pitkin (1967) referred to two distinct kinds of views such as 'authorisation view' and 'accountability view' of representation. She added that a definitive election puts a person into office, gives authority, and makes a representative. The 'authorisation view' gives representatives authority, and new rights, but no obligations or controls are placed on them. Therefore, an elected representative remains free from the usual responsibility for his or her actions. By contrast, the 'accountability view' makes it clear that a representative has special obligations. This view equates election with a holding-to-account. The 'accountability view' is that genuine representation exists only where there are controls on representatives and there is accountability to the represented so that the person will be responsive to the needs and claims of the constituents.

1.3.1 Theories of representation

There are a number of competing theories of representation but no single agreed theory. Again, no single model is sufficient to explain representative government, therefore, it is common that more than one principle of representation can be seen operating in a single political system. However, comparatively more support has been observed for the commonly used theories, such as, trusteeship, delegation, mandate and symbolic representation (Catt, 1997a; Heywood, 1997; Sawer, 2001a). A trustee is a person who is given the formal responsibility of someone else's property or affairs. The Westminster-style parliamentary systems based on British traditions have often portrayed representatives as trustees whose prime responsibility is to exercise their own judgement and wisdom on behalf of their constituents. A delegate is a person who acts for another person having clear instructions and guidance. The mandate model is based on the idea that a political party gains a popular mandate to carry out the policies promised during the election campaign. Unlike trustee and delegate models, the mandate model signifies that it is the party rather than the individual that is the agency of representation. Heywood (1997, p. 298) argued that the notion of representatives as independent actors conflicts sharply with strict party discipline. Therefore, in parliamentary systems, the doctrine of the mandate views parties as the central mechanism through which representation takes place. Symbolic representation is used to ensure the presence of representatives of a marginalised group. Sawer (2001a, p. 43)

argued that in symbolic representation a representative can stand for the represented in two ways. Firstly, by sharing the characteristics of the represented, which is popularly known as mirror, or resemblance model of representation. Secondly, a representative may symbolise his/her identity that may not necessarily resemble those represented as a flag usually symbolises a nation. The mirror or resemblance model of representation, as the name suggests, is where a person symbolises the identity or qualities of a class of persons. By this standard, a representative government would constitute a microcosm of the larger society containing members of all groups in terms of social class, gender, religion, ethnicity and so on.

Pitkin's (1967, p. 218) assertion of the duty of a representative is that "he is an agent of his locality as well as the governor of the nation" and "this dual task is difficult but neither practically nor theoretically impossible". However, representing a political party within the framework of a political institution is the first and foremost duty of a representative as Pitkin argued "...in the modern state the legislator is neither bound by the wishes of his constituency nor free to act in the national interest as he sees it, but that he is bound to act in accord with the program of his political party" (1967, p. 147). Thus to a considerable extent political parties telescope both the nation and constituency representation. Sawyer (2001a, p. 48) referred to the importance of political party in Australian politics. The Labour parliamentarians possess the view that 'you're not there because of yourself, but because of your party'.

Following party, nation and constituency, there appears yet another duty of female representatives, to represent women, which is a requirement of the resemblance model of representative democracy. Women's rights activists are in favour of women's 'group representation' for three main reasons. Firstly, for justice and equity reasons it is unfair that women should be kept out of the political arena. Secondly, women will bring to politics a different set of values, experiences and expertise and will enrich political life, usually in the direction of a more caring, compassionate society. The third argument claims that men cannot represent women's distinct interests. Some even suggested that to achieve equality, women legislators' single most significant role should be to initiate activities on behalf of women's interests and thus the goal of "representation of women by women" can be achieved (Burrell, 1994, p. 151).

However, this kind of representation that measures outputs that benefit women only, raises the question of women's effectiveness as legislative representatives. This is also an indication of possible conflicts of how women fit into the models of representation as a group. Women's pressure groups want more women in the legislature based on the expectation that they will work for women and children's issues. It is also evident that women legislators feel a responsibility towards women. But can women manage to be special representatives for women? What happens to their constituency responsibilities? How do they fulfil their obligations to their respective political parties? Is "representation of women by women" a desired "institutional behaviour"⁷ of legislators? The formation of a Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues (CCWI) in the US Congress is a significant example of specialisation of functioning. The Emily's List of the Democrat women in the US and Labour women in Australia is another example of how feminist organisations financed feminist candidates and held them responsible and accountable for equity commitments and bringing forward women and children's issues. In 1997 the Australian Labour women candidates committed themselves to promoting women's causes in the parliament, and had to sign a separate questionnaire/declaration relating to abortion. Sawyer (2001b, 2002) argued that Emily's List is an institution building activity where gender issues are promoted from a professionalised party platform. However, the outcome of this kind of structure of accountability of feminist commitment is yet to be tested.

Decision or policymaking is the main task of representatives. But women are often faulted for not taking initiatives in decision making. The apparent signs of women's ineffectiveness are; they avoid conflicts, they are less active than men, less willing to speak and less inclined to initiate. They have also been reproached for their lack of ambition and amateurism and incapacity at self-advertisement. Women use political power sometimes in covert, sometimes in symbolic forms, which, it is argued, is responsible for women's seeming powerlessness as well as ineffectiveness (Vallance, 1979; Randall, 1987; Liswood, 1999). This leads to another avenue of examination: whether gender stereotypes have any impact on women's style of power. Among others, Stroebe and Insko (1989, p. 5) defined a stereotype as a set of beliefs about the personal attributes of a group of people. They cited examples of women caring for

⁷ Rather than symbiotic behaviour of individuals, 'institutional behaviour' is the expected behaviour of legislators. See Wahlke, 1962, p. 10.

children needing nurturance and warmth and through repeated observation this leads to the belief that childcare is typical of women's responsibilities. Stereotyped beliefs about the attributes of men and women are pervasive and widely shared. Heilman (2001, p. 658) cites specific gender characteristics for men as aggressive, forceful, independent and decisive. In contrast, women are depicted as kind, helpful and sympathetic.

The idea of women's representation in legislatures came from Sidney and Beatrice Webb (1920, p. 63) by viewing the composition of the British House of Lords. They stated:

Its decisions are vitiated by its composition - it is the worst representative assembly ever created, in that it contains absolutely no members of the manual working class; none of the great classes of shopkeepers, clerks and teachers; none of the half of all the citizens who are of the female sex; and practically none of religious nonconformity, of art, science or literature.

The Webbs' observation attracted great attention among political theorists. Fairlie (1940b); Friedrich (1949) and Eulau (1962b) were prominent in favour of this view. Friedrich (1949, p. 304) addressed this as 'speaking for the Socialists'. Initially women's representation came as a 'socialist' idea and later as a 'demographic' concept. However, Pitkin (1967) claimed that the socialist or demographic kind of descriptive representation has no room for authorisation and accountability; rather it 'stands for' some people by virtue of a correspondence. It depends on the representative's characteristics of what he/she is, or is like, and works by resemblance or reflection as a mirror. This kind of mirror or resemblance is obviously relevant to political life but it is only a partial view and therefore, deceptive in areas where it is not applied. Also, this kind of representation concentrates on composition rather than activities. Thus Pitkin's own version of representation, that it is: "activities rather than the characteristics that matter" (1967, p. 224). By ignoring an individual legislator's identity, Pitkin's assertion focuses on legislative outputs only. We may find it very difficult to assess an individual legislator's activities in a collective organisation.

Nonetheless, today, women seek political power in institutions that are changing rapidly from Pitkin's time. Phillips (1995, 2001) criticised Pitkin's judgement for ignoring identity and limiting representation to mirror representation. She argued that:

...earlier ideas about 'mirror' representation have then returned to the political agenda.....that no one can better express the distinctive perspectives of a group than someone who is a group member, and that no one else is likely to be a better judge of group interests. Embodiment matters. By their presence in the decision making chamber, members of a previously marginalised group can better guarantee that their interests and perspectives will be articulated. By their very presence, they also make it more likely that members of dominant groups will recognise and speak to their concerns (Phillips, 2001, p. 26).

The increasing support for symbolic or mirror representation is also evident from Norris's (1996, pp. 101-2) work. She argued that:

In the classic view of representative government, Parliament should be the main debating chamber for the nation, the forum where all voices are heard. On symbolic grounds alone, the case can be made for increasing the number of women MPs.....Yet the substantive argument is harder to sustain with good evidence.....gender influences policy attitudes, priorities and legislative roles. Women tended to give stronger support for issues of women's rights, they express greater concern about social policy issues, and they give higher priority to constituency casework.....the study suggests that the election of more women to Westminster has the potential to make more than just a symbolic difference.

'Presence', which is less valued by Pitkin, is a 'must' for others these days, the simple logic being that, participation of marginalised groups in decision-making bodies is the democratic requirement of nation states. A group is representative if the sample includes the same proportion of each relevant subgroup as the population from which it is drawn. Such subgroups are usually assumed to be based upon age, sex, class, religion, racial division and in some places occupation. Many contemporary political scientists strongly criticised Pitkin for rejecting the socialist's descriptive representation and demanding democratic equality. Anne Phillips (1995, p. 5) proposed:

Many of the current arguments over democracy revolve around what we might call demands for political presence: demands for the equal representation of women with men; demands for a more even-handed balance between the different ethnic groups that make up each society; demands for the political inclusion of groups that have come to see themselves as marginalized or silenced or excluded. In this major reframing of the problems of democratic equality, the separation between 'who' and 'what' is to be represented, and the subordination of the first to the second, is very much up for question. The politics of ideas is being challenged by an alternative politics of presence.

Given the history of women's low participation within the formal mechanisms of politics it is certainly possible to argue that women constitute one of the disadvantaged social groups. Young (1990, p. 186) seeks "specific representation of social groups, not interest groups or ideological groups." She described a social group as "a collective of

people who have affinity with one another because of a set of practices or way of life.” In making this distinction, it is differences of identities, rather than interests or ideologies that are her concern in relation to representative structures. In this, Young is clearly advocating what Phillips (1995, p. 21) called the ‘politics of presence’, rather than a ‘politics of ideas’. Young called for a certain number of seats in the legislature to be reserved for the members of marginalised groups to ensure special representation rights. This call was made on the assumption that underrepresentation can be overcome only by resorting to guaranteed representation and that representing difference requires constitutional guarantees of group participation within the parliamentary system. This, in turn, rests on the claim that the existing electoral and legislative processes are unrepresentative in the sense that they fail to reflect the diversity of the population in terms of presence.

Usually the term representation is used to indicate an electorate or constituency which is geographically demarcated. But as the successors of the women’s suffrage movement, pioneer women legislators were expected to be the representatives of the women’s community at large. In New Zealand; McCallum (1993, p. ix) mentioned that women from all over the country looked to early women MPs such as McCombs, Stewart, Dreaver, Grigg, Howard and Ross to be responsive to their concerns. So did the Maori women; they sought more assistance from Ratana and Tirikatene-Sullivan, two of the Maori women MPs. Majorities of the early women legislators believed that they represented a wider constituency of women than that of their electorate.⁸ Even today, women legislators feel a responsibility to serve women’s interests. For example, all of the women MPs believed that they had a special responsibility to represent the needs and interests of women.⁹ Women’s presence is related to the representation of women’s interests. An assertion of the Fourth UN World Conference on Women in 1995 is significant: ‘Women’s equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for

⁸ In the early years women MPs often enjoyed common support across party lines for social reform legislation. For example, the first Congresswoman of the US, Jeannette Rankin, had already adopted this attitude in 1916. Jeannette Rankin’s campaign included female suffrage; she fought for women to work an eight-hour day, preserve the nationality of American women and reform the health care system and child labour laws. She proposed a veto against declaring war on Germany just 5 days after she took her seat. In between the two world wars, irrespective of parties, Britain’s women MPs were motivated to improve the situation of women and children. They were successful in introducing eight Bills regarding women and children. In 1943 Dame Enid Lyons, one of the first two women MPs in the Australian Federal Parliament mentioned that from international relations to home and family, women MPs had the same burden as men. She added that women had different experiences from men and that could be reflected in their activities. See Haines, 1992; Sawyer and Simms, 1993.

⁹ A survey conducted by the IPU on 187 women parliamentarians in 65 countries in the year 2000. See Waring et al. 2000.

simple justice or democracy, but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account' (para. 181). Thus both identity and interests are necessary components of political representation. But what are these interests?

In legislatures, often women are faulted for taking stereotypical gender-based roles, which are popularly considered to be their interests (Sapiro, 1983, p. 138; Solheim, 2000, p. 19). We may find substantial evidence that women have a tendency to be biased towards certain issues and are faulted for being stereotyped. Usually these are called 'women's issues'. It is hard to demarcate issues between men and women but Katz (2002, p. 1) defined women's issues as "an issue that affects women more than men, and/or an issue that women are more likely to care about than men are." This definition covers a big range of issues where children are directly involved. Sawyer (2001a, p. 56) referred to the Australian case where women are historically seen as children's advocates. More recently, women legislators have been vocal in raising the problem of paedophilia in Australian state, territory and federal parliaments. The commonly used phrases for these issues are 'women and children's issues'; 'softer issues'; 'social welfare issues'; 'care politics'; 'care issues' and so on (Rosenthal, 1998; Skjeie, 1998; Chowdhury, 2000).

However, as suggested earlier, by limiting representational work only to women, women legislators could face conflicts with their representative roles for party, constituency and nation. It may be difficult to determine the interest for a constituency of thousands because members may have several conflicting interests. Representing women as a social group may make representatives' jobs even harder. Thus legislators are expected to perform complex interrelated tasks. But why do women MPs tend to work for stereotypical issues in the legislature? Why do some women find it difficult to exhibit the institutional behaviour which is often necessary in a legislature? The sources of stereotypes and the causes of women's stereotypical behaviour in legislatures are described in chapters two and three.

There are other reasons for women wanting more women in the parliament. Due to their small numbers women cannot easily enact laws that are crucially needed for women and children (Lijphart, 1991; Burrell, 1997; Lovenduski, 1997). There is a growing concern that male representatives cannot be women's representatives. Squires's (1996, p. 75) claim followed the logic that "men and women have conflicting

(or at least distinct) interests and it is a nonsense to think that women can be represented by men; 'group representation' is required." It is argued that if women are not present in parliament men may possibly stand for women on agreed policies or issues. But men cannot legitimately stand for women as their representatives to decide the crucial issues that affect women (Phillips 1995; Heywood, 1997).

Also there is evidence that male representatives rarely take an interest in women and children's issues. Childs (2002, p. 144) interviewed female MPs of the British House of Commons where one had tried to encourage male Labour MPs to participate in a debate on women's concerns; she had been 'almost begging them to speak in the debate' but 'couldn't get any men from our side to speak'. Another female MP recognised that 'In any political setting I've ever been in, it's never been a man who's taken a lead on child care.'

However, Schüttemeyer (1994, p. 46) criticised the group concept of representation by referring to it as the 'Rousseauist concept of democracy' such as workers' interests being represented by workers, women's interests being represented by women, and stated that this concept reflects an incorrect understanding of representation. Indeed, having a representative of one's own social class, gender or race in parliament may be helpful but is no guarantee that the representation of interests will lead to the legitimacy of parliamentary decisions, because:

First of all, interests and group loyalties overlap, making the social mirror image little more than an illusion. Secondly, the desired broad acceptance of parliamentary mediation of interests can only be reached if it is regarded as a balancing of interests over time and precisely not the automatic dominance of certain groups, which would be the consequence of sociostructural or demographic proportionality in Parliament (Schüttemeyer (1994, p. 46).

Despite such criticisms, throughout this century, there has been a growing interest in non-geographical communities as the basis for representation. Although the theory of *demographic* representation is open to many criticisms, many modern theorists seem to be strong supporters of it. The most serious criticism according to Norris and Lovenduski (1995, p. 93-5), is that a significant link is commonly assumed between the social background of legislators and their political attitudes, beliefs and opinions. But this is rarely proved. The demographic model provides only one standard by which a legislature can be judged 'representative'. Nevertheless, the authors are confident that

the concept of demographic representation is a pervasive one, which permeates much popular thinking.

In recent decades, demographic representation through quota policy has been one of the favoured forms for women to increase their numerical representation. The logic behind the introduction of quotas for women is based on the belief that groups which have suffered oppression or have been disadvantaged need guaranteed representation in order for their distinct voice to be heard. What is meant here is clearly that quotas should be used to guarantee an increase in the number of women present within parliaments. There are instances where women are given preferential treatment such as quotas and reserved seats in political parties and parliaments because they are considered disadvantaged and specific needs groups. Quite a number of individual countries have achieved significant advancement by adopting these techniques. Women's political representation has been strengthened in all the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, Germany, Costa Rica, Argentina, Mozambique and South Africa, to name just a few. Although rare, it may also be seen that without any such affirmative measures, women in some countries advanced remarkably towards equal representation. However, using quotas or reserved seats for a fixed term may be more useful than using them for an unlimited period of time. While the system apparently allowed the Nordic countries to overcome their representational barrier, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Korea, Taiwan and Nepal failed to reap the same benefit with similar provisions. In the latter countries, the legislators who came through quota and reserved seats have also been subject to criticism of their relative powerlessness and ineffectiveness. The structural loopholes regarding quotas are another issue for this research and are addressed in chapter 7.

As women's numbers in legislatures are insignificant compared to male members, their presence often resembles the symbolic conception of representation. Burrell (1997) asserted that in a representative democracy the numerical presence of women in the corridors of power is important for symbolic reasons. Studying women's symbolic representation is necessary as initially only one or two women started legislative work in almost all legislatures. They faced difficulty, discrimination, public prejudice and male chauvinism. For example, Haines (1992, p. 5) described how Agnes Macphail, the first woman MP in the Canadian House of Commons was treated by her male colleagues as 'a freak' and more attention was given to her clothes than what she said. Thomas (1994, p. 36) has given a possible explanation that women are entering into

what has been traditionally a male domain, therefore, uncomfortableness among men has been prevalent. She inferred one consequence of uncomfortableness is discrimination, which tends to make women less effective in the legislature. Baysting et al., (1993) argued that New Zealand women MPs have handled and overcome this attitudinal barrier very effectively which is a matter to be further examined.

Women legislators are serving as role models for other women, accordingly their representational role is additional to representation of party and electorate and thus their burden is higher. Also, the obligations put forward by certain organisations, such as, Emily's List, put the female legislators under constant pressure. Sawyer (2001b, 2002) therefore, favours making every legislator accountable for improvements to gender equity. In reality, representation of women by women is not straightforward as conflicts of interests are a possible outcome. It is harder for a woman legislator to be effective both as a general legislative representative and a women's representative. The members have to be loyal to the party mandate particularly where party systems are strong for many parties follow strict accountability to the party mandate. Childs (2002, p. 151) cited the example of the British Labour Party women legislators of the UK House of Commons:

The most common perception is that women who seek to act for women act only for women. This results in a tension between a woman MP's parliamentary career and acting for women. If an MP desires promotion, she cannot afford to be regarded as acting for women too often or too forcefully.

Representing women is also seen as a career-threatening act by the Australian Coalition of women legislators. Canadian studies have found that even feminist women parliamentarians felt isolated when they represented women as a different group. Similarly, for taking a special interest in certain issues, French women legislators have been scorned and considered inferior. These MPs have a feeling of being closed out by their 'otherness' (Jenson and Sineau 1994, p. 249). We find a clue here that in championing mainly women's issues, legislators are not considered powerful representatives. Although women find it hard to break the existing stereotypes, throughout the world many women MPs have widened their area of interests (Stacey and Price, 1981; Sawyer, 1994). It seems with sufficient knowledge and experience a legislator of either gender can be broadly effective. Confinement to certain areas may reflect legislators' inexperience on the multifarious problems of their constituencies.

Regarding accountability, another question can be posed: while Pitkin is in favour of strict accountability, how can accountability be ensured through affirmative measures? Modern theorists and the promoters of group presence are also in favour of accountability. Accepting group representation does not mean abandoning accountability altogether. When looking to ensure representation of different societal groups it is important that this be placed in the context with democratic structures, which promote accountability to citizens. A cautionary signal of Sawyer and Zappalà (2001, p. 11) is significant:

While presence can be shown to have important effects, Sawyer agrees with Phillips that there are dangers in placing too much emphasis on embodiment. It may reduce the pressure on representatives (not just women) to consider the gender impact of policy, and may divert attention from the need for adequate mechanisms for accountability.

Thus, no one system can guarantee the interests of groups and there is no women's constituency. Even the electorates are not homogeneous, rather they are composed of multiple interests. As women are not a homogeneous group and personal ability is an essential determinant of their capability, they can fall into any of the four (i.e., trusteeship, delegation, mandate and symbolic) models or their representation can overlap. Thus women may be responsible for 'four representative tasks' (representative for their political parties; for their constituency; for the nation and for women). To serve only women is likely to limit their overall role of legislative representation. This leads to the hypothesis that:

Representing women only may limit women's ability to fulfil their other representative roles.

Although the term 'representation' usually places a considerable weight on number, political scientists have placed greater emphasis on representatives' effective action. Representatives carry power with them and the successful power wielders are the most effective. But can every legislator exercise power? Do they have access to all sources of power? Do women exercise legislative authority with the same effectiveness as male MPs? What barriers hinder them from being effective? These questions lead us to address the key term of political effectiveness.

1.4 Political Effectiveness

The terms 'effective' and 'effectiveness' require their proper meanings in this research context. Parliamentarians are expected to be effective but do all of them know what particular qualities can make them effective? One of the successful women legislators in the US, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick analysed and assessed Congresswomen's effectiveness through her famous book *Political Woman* in 1974. Somewhat outdated but academically crucial, this publication puts forward significant opinions to assess legislators' effectiveness, which are still relevant in legislative studies. Following are examples that Kirkpatrick (1974, p. 123) discovered when women legislators think of themselves as effective:

"I am one of the more effective members and people know that."
 "I get tremendous support."
 "Everyone respects me because I get things done."
 "They know that I work hard and have an impact."
 "I think they rate me very high as a legislator."
 "Everyone knows that I am effective in getting things done."

The concept of effectiveness is difficult to define, as it is largely subjective. But the above examples reflected the opinions of MPs' revealed in their interviews that legislators are effective when they can make an impact by getting things done. Since this work involves interviewing about effectiveness, it is important to use the word 'effectiveness' with its proper meaning. While searching the literal meaning of effectiveness, it is found that the root of the words 'effective' and 'effectiveness' lie with the noun 'effect' which means a result or consequence of an action. The adjective 'effective' means having an effect, powerful in effect; striking, remarkable and so on.¹⁰ This meaning of 'effective' or 'effectiveness' not only fits this study from an academic point of view but also fits how people generally think and feel effectiveness should be. Effective legislators can create a significant impact through their activities. To Kirkpatrick (1974, p. 219) "every legislator has the possibility of influencing public policy; effective legislators have a real impact on real decisions." This seems to be a useful working definition of effectiveness for this research.

The above discussion gives a clear idea that effectiveness means making an impact on public policy and decision making. Researchers such as Goetz also interpreted

¹⁰ See The Hutchinson Encyclopedic Dictionary, 1991, p. 342.

effectiveness as making an impact on policy but she argued that women's political effectiveness is meant to be on behalf of women. She stated that:

‘Women's political effectiveness’ is understood as the ability to use ‘voice’ to politicise issues of concern to women, to use electoral leverage to press demands on decision-makers, to trigger better responsiveness from the public sector to their needs, and better enforcement of constitutional commitments to women's equal rights (Goetz, 2001, p. 1).

This special proposition of Goetz is not different from those who want ‘representation of women by women’. Also it is understandable that Goetz argues along the same lines as other women activists who believe that women face obstacles to participate in politics and to improve their political effectiveness those obstacles have to be removed or modified. Specifically she mentioned that changes to electoral systems, the nature and ideologies of political parties, the commitment of the state to democracy, and temporary arrangement of affirmative action are a few steps that can be used to reduce the barriers. Not only Goetz, but also majorities of the gender researchers' propositions are for such corrective measures to reduce barriers. One of the goals of bringing more women into the legislatures, as we have seen earlier is to bring forward issues of concern to women. No doubt issues of concern to women are of great importance for the society. In many contemporary parliaments women and children's issues face resistance from majority male legislators. Therefore, many of the bills of this kind might not be passed without women legislators' joint efforts. However, focussing on issues of concern to women only does not always reflect the effectiveness of representatives in general. It limits the representatives' role to a special kind of representation for women only, which may conflict with their other roles such as, representatives of their parties, constituencies and the nation. This also may limit their further advancement. Ridgeway (2001, p. 652) found the common societal perception that unless women assert their authority outside the traditional female domains, they are not recognised as high-status leaders. To her, this societal expectation is a constraining element and the main cause of the glass ceiling for potential women leaders. Thus dangers and risks are associated if women limit themselves to exclusively women's issues.

So how can a legislative representative be effective? It was mentioned earlier that representatives have power. Also one component of the literal meaning of ‘effective’ is that it is powerful in effect. Therefore, effectiveness is the ability to exercise power i.e.,

one's effectiveness is partly dependent on the amount of power he/she can exercise. Thus, power is a necessary but not sufficient condition of effectiveness. Without power, one cannot be effective. This inherent connection between power and effectiveness leads to an examination of power. Parsons (1969) believed that power is a generalised capacity to secure the performance of political obligations in a collective organisation. These obligations are legitimised with reference to their bearing on collective goals. In his own words:

Power, then, is generalised capacity to secure the performance of binding obligations by units in a system of collective organisation when the obligations are legitimised with reference to their bearing on collective goals and where in case of recalcitrance there is a presumption of enforcement by negative situational sanctions - whatever the actual agency of that enforcement (Parsons, 1969, p. 361).

Another element seems crucial for collective organisation i.e., influence. "Influence is a means of *persuasion*" and to Parsons power and influence seem complementary to each other (1969, p. 415). This proposition has further been strengthened by Handy (1976, p. 111) saying that power and influence are integral components of an organisation. Thus to perform legislative tasks effectively it is expected that the legislators need to be influential (Sapiro, 1983; Liswood, 1999).

Parsonian theory also prescribes that effectiveness for the collectivity as a whole is dependent on the hierarchical ordering of the organisation. However, these 'hierarchy' and 'power' issues bring some conflicts for women. A constant concern exists in the contemporary political world about women legislators' relative powerlessness and dislike of hierarchical organisations. Many feminists are opposed to the traditional domination theory of 'power over', which is a zero-sum model of power, and also hierarchical (Rowlands, 1997; Townsend, 1999a, 1999b). Lovenduski (1992, p. 607) argued:

Feminism, although a diverse movement, has exhibited a preference for the simplicity of direct democracy. It has been uncomfortable with the forms and practices of representative democracy which it suspects of being hierarchical, elitist, draconian and generally undemocratic.

It is argued that as most of the women legislators originated from community and volunteer modes of leadership, they have a tendency to exhibit a more interactive style of leadership. They encourage participation, share power and enhance other people's self-worth. It is also argued that women enter politics to solve problems rather than to struggle for power (Forbes, 1991, p. 24-5; Rosenthal, 1998, p. 5). Sawyer (2001b, p.

166) referred to the common Australian perception of men and women's style of power that women are more charitable and oriented to community activities. On the other hand, men are more interested in gaining power and in their careers. All of these perceptions may lead to an assumption that women legislators find the hierarchical path harder than male legislators and ultimately this may make it more difficult for women to rise to the top.

However, there is no demarcation in legislative tasks between male and female legislators. Rather some universal duties and responsibilities bind all of them. A legislature is a multimember representative body. Although the role of legislatures varies from state to state and system to system, a complex of functions is expected to be fulfilled by them. Constitutional work has no particular boundary but individually legislators can perform effectively in the system by holding cabinet and select/standing committee positions. Their speaking ability and overall reputation also signify their effectiveness. How does this generalised effectiveness of legislators differ from the proposition of Goetz? Can women be effective without serving in these legislative areas such as cabinet and select committee positions? Unless women are effective in more generalised areas of representation it will be difficult for them to serve women separately. Thus the political effectiveness of women legislators can be seen in two different aspects. First, women as general legislative representatives, and second, women as women's representatives. Around the globe many women legislators are found to be very effective as general legislators. At the same time they are effective in representing women. Examples are Dr Judith Zaffirini of Texas Senate, Gro Harlem Brundtland of Norway, Congresswomen Lindy Boggs and Patricia Schroeder to name a few. There are, however, also some very effective women legislators who generally failed to raise issues of concern to women e.g. Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher.

This study examines how women overcome traditional barriers by observing both their numeric representation and their power, influence and effectiveness in legislatures. But how can we assess effectiveness? As effectiveness is the ability to use power to make an impact, therefore, a possibility is assessing power can assess effectiveness. But the problem associated with this is one can use power badly and can be ineffective. Therefore, just the use of power is not sufficient to make one effective. Assessing power is a necessary element of assessing effectiveness, however, it cannot on its own serve the purpose of assessing effectiveness. Measuring power is recognised as a

universal problem because of the lack of a suitable indicator. Barnes (1988, p. 9-10) cited two different kinds of approaches to measuring power: *event* and *reputational*. The *event* approach originated by Dahl (1961) deals with the attempts of individuals to influence the outcomes of specific political decisions and is not dependent on second hand reporting. As Barnes put it:

Successful intervention in decision-taking processes was an indicator of the power of the intervener: those individuals whose interventions were most frequently successful could be considered the most powerful.

As a legislature is a task-oriented institution, it is a decision-making place, thus legislators have plenty of opportunity to exercise influence and power over events. But there are problems too. The role of the individual legislator cannot be assessed easily in passing bills and choosing leaders because these are group decisions and many of the key decisions are taken behind closed doors. Thus it is difficult to assess the individual legislator's effectiveness by looking only at legislative outputs. Therefore, to supplement our understanding of effectiveness, the other indicator of power can be used. In the *reputational* approach,

....members are asked to name the most powerful individuals in their community, and perhaps to rank-order these individuals according to the 'amount' of power they possess. All the individual responses are then combined and processed to produce a map of 'the' power structure of the community.

Although the *reputational* indicator relies upon second-hand reporting it is equally as important as the *event* approach. For example, among legislative tasks, committee assignments, introducing bills, and getting them passed, seem countable and event-based but lobbying and speaking are more susceptible to *reputational* indicators, which are not easy to measure. Personal charisma falls into this category. Thus *event* or *reputational* measure alone may not be an accurate method but most of the time they can go together. For instance, one MP may talk much in the House, but her talk may not be related to any particular bill or problem. Media publicity on women leaders of New Zealand is an example of *reputational* measurement. By using both the *event* and *reputational* approaches, we intend to assess women legislators' power and effectiveness through the following activities and qualities:

- Holding of cabinet positions
- Select committee assignments

- Speaking ability
- Overall reputation

Cabinet ministers exercise power and influence and can be effective. Select committee is a crucial avenue to show legislators' power and effectiveness. Speaking ability reflects one's confidence about a subject as well as her control over the audience and leads to effectiveness. Similarly overall reputation is earned through legislators' effective activities. Thus, women legislators' power and effectiveness are generally reflected through the above activities and qualities. Each indicator, however, requires explanation about its importance in legislatures. The extremely small presence of women as heads of state and cabinet ministers, which we observed at the beginning of this chapter, is an indication of how demanding and competitive these positions are. The degree of power exercised by cabinet ministers is reflected by Davis (1997) who noted that the cabinet is the pinnacle of power in parliamentary democracies and all legislative and regulatory decisions are made by the cabinet; it is the key decision-making body. Throughout this work we may observe that many of the long time serving dedicated and powerful legislators could not influence policies unless they entered the cabinet. Thus cabinet is recognised as the crucial place to exercise power and to become effective.

Some cabinet positions are said to be more powerful and prestigious as they are considered as stepping-stones for the position of top executive, such as foreign affairs, finance and defence. This proposition also claims that women generally are placed in/chosen for softer portfolios such as health, social welfare and education which do not lead to the top (Reynolds, 1999). This proposition is a matter of major inquiry in this research and addressed in several places below.

Select committees can play effective roles and are recognised as parliamentary watchdogs. But their power varies from presidential systems to parliamentary systems. For instance, the congressional committees are enormously powerful which is evident in the following statement:

It is generally agreed that the US Congress has the most powerful committees found anywhere in the world, and these provide a model which many other assemblies have tried to adopt. Their power certainly stems from their specialist responsibilities, permanent membership and lavish support in terms of funding and access to advice... Most importantly, however, Congress has

a relatively weak party system, which allows its committees considerable independence from the presidency. Where stricter party discipline operates, as in Australia, New Zealand and the UK, committees are effectively neutered by the fact that the majority of their members owe an overriding loyalty to the government of the day (Heywood, 1997, p. 305).

The role of select committees also varies from majority to minority governments under parliamentary systems. They are quite powerful in Germany and Norway as they are the centres of most of the action. Again, some argue that members' effectiveness depend on the power of committees (Gehlen, 1969; Kirkpatrick, 1974). However, the relationship between select committees and power in various systems will be addressed in chapter two. Secondly, although committees may not seem equally powerful in all systems, it is worthwhile to study whether women show stereotypical issue bias that affects their effectiveness. It is also a matter to be examined through this work whether they are placed or they choose to be in those committees.

Speaking ability is one of the essential ingredients of political leaders. Legislators have multiple opportunities to speak such as in election campaigning, in public meetings/conferences, in the House and in select committees. This work came across quite a number of cases where women legislators failed to achieve their targeted goal due to poor communication skills. However, verbal communication also carries an essence of power, otherwise women activists would not be worried about women's passive nature of communication. Sapiro (1983, p. 172) asserted that women's "language is the language of the noninfluential, of those who are deferential and dependent." Again Liswood (1999, p. 1) stated, "women tend to need to practise the more authoritative skills and to learn to express their opinions directly and loudly". And if women are less politically involved, it may be because they lack the skills, experience and language, which generate political knowledge and a sense of political efficacy. It is therefore, intended to assess women legislators' effectiveness through their speaking ability.

However, speaking ability is also related to other indicators of effectiveness. For example, overall reputation. Among other activities, excellent public speaking can give legislators a good reputation. Often charismatic leaders speak very well. One critical difficulty, however, needs to be acknowledged: unless charismatic speeches are integrated with actions, legislators may not be considered effective. However, reputation contains substantial evidence of people's support. Also, it is almost

impossible for legislators to earn a good reputation without doing anything effectively. Hence, assessing women legislators' effectiveness on the basis of reputation is a worthwhile task.

On the basis of the assessment of women's legislative performance against the four determinants, (i) holding of cabinet positions, (ii) select committee assignments, (iii) speaking ability, and (iv) overall reputation, it should be possible to assess the power and effectiveness of women as legislators. This leads to the hypothesis that:

Women's effective legislative representation can be assessed according to their ability to exercise power through selective legislative tasks and through reputational indicators.

But where effectiveness is assessed according to legislators' ability to exercise power, we may experience that women legislators face difficulty in attaining the recognised sources of legislative power. For example, political parties not only exercise power to nominate candidates, they are the fundamental sites of political apprenticeship for decision making. But party hierarchy is usually composed of male politicians and women usually remain at the bottom of the hierarchy and also often they remain in powerless women's sections. Their inexperience as policy makers may be reflected in the House. Critics suggested specific barriers need to be corrected. Among those, the gatekeepers' attitude of political parties and electoral systems are significant (Young, 1990; McLean, 1991; Phillips, 1995; 2001; Goetz, 2001). Some other factors such as the nature of the regime, poor educational and occupational attainment are also significant barriers. The correction measures suggested as needed to deal with barriers are proportional representation electoral systems and more liberal attitudes on the part of political parties. All these help to increase women's number primarily and thereafter the power and influence of women as a group. However, there may not be one single formula to overcome the barriers of women's underrepresentation across nations. But once the barriers are identified, correcting those barriers can be the sources of power that leads to effectiveness. These sources of power are described in chapter two.

1.5 Project profile

Given the difficulty of measuring effectiveness, a case study seems to be the best approach. This may focus on women legislators' effectiveness in a particular

nation/state. It has already been indicated that there are barriers to women being effective. But also there are corrective measures to those barriers. The key to effectiveness is the ability to use power and there is an indication of several sources of power that leads to effectiveness. With these specific strengths, this study intends to examine the extent of barriers and the handling of the dilemma of women's representatives' roles and the key steps to become effective.

Klenke (1996) suggested that both regional and cultural factors not only affect women's participation in politics but also affect their effective performance. The cultural impact on gender varies from country to country and remains one of the most important indicators of the power and influence of women legislators. Because of the degree to which these factors differ from culture to culture and nation to nation, they need to be tested in different corners of the globe, and therefore, it is intended to check them in some selected countries. That also suggests the need to carry out a cross-regional and cross-cultural study to see how women exert power and influence in a patriarchal society where tasks are allocated according to gender.

Conducting primary research in three corners of the globe on limited funds in a short period of time (3 years) is not feasible. However, it is possible to compare some points with the findings of a specific country. Therefore, among the three cross-regional and cross-cultural nations, New Zealand is the primary case and Bangladesh and Norway have been used for brief comparisons. These three countries have been selected partly on the basis of one common factor: that women leaders have run these countries. Although there are a few other countries that are run by women, these three countries have been selected because they are also distinct in terms of their geographical location, culture and political environment. Bangladesh is a South Asian nation where the patriarchal system reinforces women's dependency and men have strong reservations regarding women in leadership and management positions. Despite this strong patriarchal culture, two women leaders have ruled the country for more than a decade now. In addition, a special provision for women's reserved seats in parliament was introduced in 1972. Notwithstanding these apparently favourable elements, women's parliamentary representation reached only 2% in this new millennium. Norway, on the other hand, has reached 36.4% in women's representation, assisted by quotas in political parties in the 1980s. Norway is not the only Scandinavian country to achieve this high

percentage of women in the legislature. This is perhaps an outcome of these countries' egalitarian culture.

New Zealand, located in the South Pacific, is exemplary in terms of women's parliamentary representation. None of the Pacific Island countries can be compared to New Zealand, even Australia with a similar culture and economy lags behind in this respect. New Zealand is a unique case as it was the first nation state in the world to give women the right to vote in parliamentary elections in 1893. Not only that, until 1996 it held number one global position to lead women's parliamentary representation under the First-Past-the-Post (FPP) electoral system. It may have similarities with Norway for its Western democracy and culture but it also has a distinct indigenous Maori culture. Although there is a quota provision in parliamentary seats for Maori, without receiving any special treatment or affirmative action like reserved seats or quotas to enter the parliament, women in New Zealand have earned the 8th global position by reaching 30.8% in parliamentary representation. These contrasting inequalities of the three countries lead us to examine in-depth the causes of women's varying representation and the strength and weaknesses of the special measures used by New Zealand women to overcome these barriers to achieve this level of representation. Also a reasonably high level of women's representation does not establish that New Zealand women MPs are effective. That leads us to examine their effectiveness. It is also useful to focus on New Zealand to compare it to one nation that has more and one that has fewer women in the legislature. However, one case and two partial cases are not sufficient to establish an accurate generalisation, although examples will be cited from different countries to supplement the information obtained.

New Zealand has already experienced two women Governor-Generals and two women Prime Ministers, and the Chief Justice and the Attorney General are also women. Light (1998, pp. 20-1) praised New Zealand, arguing that it is blessed with some fabulous women politicians. For their willpower, firmness and energy they can be recognised as inspirational role models. Referring to appointments of women to top jobs, the executive director of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Trust, Trudie McNaughton, stated that this "really fits our self-image in New Zealand that people will get a fair go. We're sending a very strong message internationally that New Zealand is a country where talent is valued" (quoted in Stirling, 2000, p. 20). It is not only nationally, but this good reputation is also appreciated internationally. France's *Le*

Monde newspaper termed Prime Minister Helen Clark, then Opposition Leader Jenny Shipley, Green Party Co-Leader Jeanette Fitzsimons and former Auckland Mayor Christine Fletcher efficient and political high-flyers (quoted in *The Press*, 2000). Referring to Britain's 2001 general election, a British newspaper the *Scotsman* ran a two-page article on New Zealand's women leaders and noted "a country run by women – if they can do it, why can't we?" (quoted in Espiner, 2001, p. 7).

Quite a number of studies have been undertaken in New Zealand in to the areas of women's participation in parliament and local government, and their leadership style. A few biographies of women legislators have been published where they have narrated their own experience as legislators (Baysting et al, 1993; McCallum, 1993). One study tested their professionalism and found that women MPs could be categorised as professionals (Wilson, 1983). Another researcher conducted a study of whether women MPs had reached critical mass by examining Hansards. The findings suggested that New Zealand women MPs' numerical critical mass has not changed the parliamentary culture to a feminine approach (Grey, 1999). All of these studies carry valuable information, referred to repeatedly in this research. While the few women in New Zealand have earned both a national and an international reputation, it is, however, noticeable that very little account has been taken of the women legislators' representational role, power and effectiveness in the parliament. In the current debate about the roles of women legislators, therefore, this research is an attempt to fill those gaps in the contemporary literature. The uniqueness of this study is that it not only examines New Zealand's case but also refers to two other cross cultural nations, Bangladesh and Norway.

We came across various elements that can be causal to achieve the goal of assessing effectiveness. For example, certain cultural and religious prescriptions may influence women legislators' performance. Prejudice of male dominated political parties may be the cause of the poor supply of women candidates. Women's stereotypical issue preference can be a cause of their ineffectiveness. Due to structural loopholes, women of some countries cannot get the desired result from quotas and reserved seats. On the other hand, without any such artificial aids, women of some countries can show remarkable progress. In addition to the hypotheses presented here, a number of relevant questions can be raised.

- To what extent do cultural and religious barriers impact on women's political effectiveness? What is the cause of New Zealand women's relative success in parliamentary representation without any artificial aid such as quotas and reserved seats? Were the identified barriers lower or were women better organised?
- What causes the failure of reserved seats in Bangladesh but success in Norway?
- Do political parties have a prejudice against nominating women as electoral candidates?
- What causes women legislators to be stereotyped and focussed only on women and children's issues?
- Can women be effective as general legislative representatives?
- Can women be effective as women's representatives?

1.6 Research design/Methodology

This empirical work shares some features with the work done by Lena Wängnerud.¹¹ Her research examines system and strategy to find out which one weighs more for Nordic women's striking level of legislative representation. Under the system oriented approach, Nordic passion for equality and the PR electoral system are considered as variables. The strategy approach dealt with party strategies and women's own activities. While other research on Nordic countries highly credited the systems i.e., egalitarian culture and PR electoral system, Wängnerud (2000, p. 148-9) assessed these two static factors as an advantageous starting point for women's rapid legislative growth. She however, gave the highest credit to the strategy approach. For example, the party strategy includes the introduction of quotas, and adding gender related matters onto the party agenda by left parties. It was possible because the persons closely related with the political system possessed egalitarian values and they considered women's claim for representation as legitimate. Secondly, women's activities in and outside party, women legislators' regular contact with women's organisations, their parliamentary work with a bearing on gender equality is exemplary. In addition, she found a rare strategy taken by the women in Nordic countries i.e., party-linked women's federations. These federations have been an important recruitment base for women candidates.

¹¹ See 'Representing Women' by Lena Wängnerud in Peter Esaiasson and Knut Heidar (eds), 2000, p.

Taking New Zealand as a case study, both system and strategy are used to assess women legislators' performance. Unlike Nordic countries, the system, particularly the electoral system, is not static in New Zealand. The impact of the recent change of FPP to PR electoral system can be undertaken as a matter of assessment. Again, strategies taken by political parties and women's organisations in New Zealand may have an impact on women's better representation, which can be another area of investigation. Thus the merit of system versus strategy can be assessed. Other variables such as the nature of the regime and socio-economic conditions are considered. This research is also distinct in that it not only considers the number of women but the activities and effectiveness of women legislators. Primary research is conducted in two different formats, namely, mail questionnaire for male MPs and personal interviews for female MPs. That means the same issues are judged from different perspectives. The justification for addressing the problems from two different angles is based on the fact that different aspects of the questions are being addressed and because the tendency of faulting women for their alleged passivity is mostly brought by male researchers and politicians. Therefore, the male politicians of New Zealand are asked to evaluate their female colleagues. In other words, what is their perception of the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of female MPs. This is a *reputational* approach to assess effectiveness. On the other hand, female MPs are asked why they are seen differently from their male colleagues in performing legislative tasks. How are they coping with the alleged ineffectiveness of dealing with only stereotypical issues? The questionnaires regarding the influence and effectiveness of women legislators were sent to 40 male MPs. The selection criteria were not based upon the usual random sampling method but on the following criteria:

- a. all new male MPs in the 1999-2002 parliament
- b. leaders, deputy leaders, speaker/assistant speakers and whips of all parties
- c. MPs located in Christchurch

This particular selection method was chosen on the basis of an assumption that all new male MPs had the chance to observe their female colleagues' performance for the first time. Being new in the parliament they would have keenly observed the behaviour of all MPs. The second criterion was intended to take into account senior legislators'

opinions. These were selected from every party in different leadership positions. The third criterion was adopted to assess opinion in the context of a small geographical location.

However, some male MPs declined to answer the questionnaire because of time constraints. A few were reluctant to fill it out but showed an interest in personal interviews. Thus the interviews were not limited to female MPs but also included a number of male MPs in order to obtain their views about their female colleagues' performance in the House. Among them, the opinion of the Speaker is significant. It is noteworthy that the Speaker, the Right Honourable Jonathan Hunt, is the longest serving MP in the New Zealand Parliament. Of 76 women MPs, he has worked with all except the first five. His rare experience is an opportunity to obtain one person's overview of most women MPs from a key officer of parliament.

All 37 women MPs of the 46th parliament were targeted for interviews and written requests were sent. At first most responded positively but some interviewees cancelled their appointments at the last minute because of their parliamentary duties. Only one MP directly declined to be interviewed expressing her non-interest in the research topic. The Office of the Prime Minister acknowledged written requests every time but did not arrange an interview. In total 22 women MPs (more than 50%) participated in the interviews. In-depth interviews of women MPs allowed them to express their personal experience, feelings, views and opinions about how they exert power while making policies. All of them were very co-operative. One former woman MP, Jill White, was interviewed to get her view of why she went back to local government by resigning from the parliament. Another, a National Party woman executive was interviewed to investigate the alleged discrimination of the party against women's nomination.

1.7 Secondary sources

To address an international perspective it is essential to draw distinctions between the gender cultures of different countries. Specific gender cultures are important determinants of women's involvement and integration into politics. How a specific gender culture influences women's educational and professional achievements is important; for example, education seems to be a prerequisite for politicians. Attitudes of men and women legislators towards their responsibilities are another major basis of comparison. To overcome different barriers to women's effective political

representation, all three countries used certain special measures and techniques. It is intended to compare the success/failure of those techniques. Secondary source materials have been collected from documents, Hansards, publications, reports and other research findings pertaining to women legislators' performance globally. Placement of women legislators into select committees in the New Zealand Parliament is considered in order to assess their active role and to search for alleged discrimination in allocating only social welfare tasks. The study period covers from the year 1933 (the first time a woman entered parliament) to the 2002 parliament of New Zealand. The findings are then compared more widely, in particular with Bangladesh and Norway and inferences are drawn about whether women legislators in New Zealand differ from others in terms of power, influence and effectiveness.

1.8 Structure of the thesis

Chapters two and three broadly canvass the literature on barriers to women's participation in politics and the effectiveness of their representation in parliaments. Chapter two points out the general societal barriers where the sources of stereotypes are located. Then it displays a diagram to show the sources of different kinds of political power and influence that lead to effectiveness. It also describes the techniques by which legislators become effective by using these sources of power both individually and in groups. This chapter presents a number of propositions whose validity is duly tested in the following chapters. Chapter three assesses women legislators' influence in the contemporary world. It divides women legislators into three categories based on findings and information about their performance and issue preference.

Chapter four addresses the general barriers to the development of women's representation in the New Zealand parliament. It involves an examination into the historical events of New Zealand women's political emancipation, their gradual advancement in parliamentary life and their issue preference. All through the chapter, an attempt has been made to measure the impact of the Cult of Domesticity on women's advancement.

An investigation has been made through Chapter five of the special measures and techniques taken by New Zealand women to overcome the barriers against effective representation. Women MPs' power and effectiveness are documented through the use of different sources of power.

Chapter six constitutes the core of the case study. It analyses the perceived effectiveness and ineffectiveness of women's representation in New Zealand based on the survey questionnaire and personal interviews. The relevant findings have been compared with the previous findings that are documented in chapters four and five.

Chapter seven is about women's representation in Norway and Bangladesh based on the secondary sources of literature for both countries. To analyse the situation of women's parliamentary representation in these two countries the same variables are used as in New Zealand. The goal of this chapter is to determine the strength and weaknesses of various techniques used in these two countries to increase women's effective representation.

Chapter eight draws conclusions. It analyses all the propositions proposed for the three countries and assesses the causes of women's comparative effectiveness or ineffectiveness.

CHAPTER TWO

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION AND EFFECTIVENESS AND SOURCES OF POWER

This chapter examines the barriers to women's political participation and effectiveness and the sources of power. There was an indication in the previous chapter that due to general societal barriers women are less visible in the political arena. Secondly, they face difficulty in accessing different sources of power and influence. Both kinds of barriers hinder women from participating and performing effectively in legislatures (Rule, 1994a, 1994b; Liswood, 1999; Reynolds, 1999; Carli and Eagly, 2001; Goetz, 2001). It may be seen that the specific barriers that cause women's underrepresentation, may also cause their ineffectiveness. But with corrective measures these barriers can be overcome. The successful use of different sources of power and influence can lead to effectiveness. However, barriers differ from nation to nation. So do the sources of power. While our research characterised the electoral system as an institutional source of power, Wängnerud (2000) classified it as a systemic variable. Both the activities of political parties and women's activities are considered as strategies to her, while we called them sources of institutional and group power respectively. The aim however, is no different. The theoretical backgrounds of these themes are explored in this chapter. In addition to the major three hypotheses in chapter one, several sub hypotheses have been formulated throughout this chapter.

The chapter advances with the examination of the hypothesis that '*specific barriers hinder women's legislative participation and effectiveness.*' There appear to be quite a few significant barriers that are responsible for women's limited visibility and access to political power. Often these barriers are interrelated and overlapping. However, based on the available literature, for clarity, we divide them into four as *women's reproductive role; private and public roles; cultural, and religious norms.*

2.1 General societal barriers

2.1.1 Reproductive roles

Both the participation and effectiveness of women as legislative representatives are affected by their reproductive roles. No one doubts that there are some biological

differences between men and women. Although power can be identified as the most vital factor of gender differentiation in political behaviour, the reproductive role remains an important source of this differentiation. Although, other than breast feeding, men could rear children, in connection with women's reproductive role people have expected that women should be at home to rear children. Biological differences between man and women have systematic social implications. Both Kirkpatrick (1974, p. 221) and Holmstrom (1997, p. 60) argued that all other psychological and ontological differences between genders originated from the basis of biology. Holmstrom put it specifically,

...the linkage is usually made through psychology. Those who emphasise the biological differences between the sexes as critical to their social roles and their natures usually maintain that the biological differences cause psychological differences and these in turn determine their respective social roles.

But what are the social roles? Due to recent social and cultural changes, a wider consensus has been achieved so that other than bearing and rearing children, more opportunities are available to women (Hall, 1992, p. 28). Still women take more responsibilities in caring for children and family, and as Haines (1992, p. 189) notes, mothering is a 'very under-rated occupation.' In this, Flora and Lynn, (1974, p. 39) believed that "children, because of the low monetary value placed upon caring for them, serve as one of the many factors that assign a low degree of worth to women, contributing to women's low self-esteem that hinders them in attempting to participate in politics." Thus women's child bearing role restricts women's physical attendance, as childbirth and rearing children requires that they take time out from their careers.

Not only do women's reproductive roles result in low prestige and social status related to mothers, but the long term consequence of women's confinement at home with child care responsibilities and domestic affairs limit them from acquiring self-confidence, which is ultimately necessary for exercising power in public life. There may be other factors for women's seeming passivity and lack of initiative, but reproductive and childrearing tasks seem to impose specific negative consequences. It hinders confidence and self-esteem that are extremely necessary for political and legislative effectiveness. In chapter three we intend to observe whether the reproductive role of women legislators' affects their political career.

2.1.2 Private versus public roles

Demarcation of private and public spheres, as mentioned in the previous chapter, is another barrier that can develop various limitations on women's advancement. There has been a near universal acceptance of private spheres as belonging to the domain of women and public places to that of men. This gender-based division of work has a pervasive influence on the everyday socialisation of men and women. Also, this distinction contributes towards making women and their political interests invisible to the general people (Jones, 1988, p. 12). The said bifurcation, argued by Sapiro (1983, p. 192) is based on a division of labour that restricts both sexes in an 'asymmetrical manner' and the origin of this kind of social construction of gender is in the family. Following that, Okin (1991, pp. 69&80) stated:

Men are assumed to be chiefly preoccupied with and responsible for the occupations of the sphere of economic and political life, and women with those of the private sphere of domesticity and reproduction. Women have been regarded as 'by nature' both unsuited to the public realm and rightly dependent on men and subordinated within the family. These assumptions, not surprisingly, have pervasive effects on the structuring of the dichotomy and of both its component spheres.....Once we admit the idea that significant differences between women and men are *created* by the existing division of labour within the family, we begin to see the depth and the extent of the social construction of gender.

Thus very few links were made between the two spheres, and the domestic and private spheres were assumed to be irrelevant to social and political theory. This forced division between the two spheres hinders women in acquiring power, which is necessary for the political world, because it is believed that political power is usually located in the public sphere.

However, unlike the majority of past theorists, in the late eighteenth century Mary Wollstonecraft (quoted in Held, 1991, p. 7) made a strong case that there are deeply rooted connections between the public and private spheres and a possibility of citizenship, justice and participation in government by women. She indicated that the obstacles against this possibility were anchored heavily in unequal gender relations. The continued use of a public-private separation equated with a gender division perpetuating the distortion of the political activities and capacities of both men and women.

Modern theorists started to consider the sharp demarcating line as a blurred one between the two spheres. Sapiro (1983) argued that it would be nearly impossible to mark the

boundaries of public and private. She went on to say that women's significance remains tied to private roles, especially those in the family, and that the political significance of women is derived from those. She demonstrated the situation through a model of the role transformation of women from the domestic to the political domain:

Table 2.1. Common extrapolations from domestic roles to political interests

Domestic Role	Political Interest
Mother	Child Welfare: child labour recreation environment morality Social welfare Education Peace
Housekeeper	Civic reform Environment
Guardian of domestic tranquillity and harmony	Peace Arts and culture
Guardian of religion and domestic morality	"Moral" issues Education
Consumer	Consumer
Woman	Issues directly affecting the welfare and rights of women

Source: Sapiro, 1983, P. 146.

Sapiro broke the tradition by developing this model (Table 2.1). She was a pioneer in arguing that women are supposed to bring a unique perspective to politics such as moralism or personalism because of the domination of their values by those derived from their private family concerns. Her argument regarding childcare seems a striking one: 'Children are not "private goods"; without them we have no future. Therefore, the task of childcare is not a purely private matter; it is a public obligation' (1983, p. 189).

The model is an example of how women's private life experience constructs their feminine gender differently than experience in a typical political arena. However, based on different interests, characteristics and roles, there is a global tendency to underestimate the feminine gender. Gender roles appear to be evaluated into low and high value types in society and special issues and interests of women are seen as low value. The origin of these two contrasting evaluation measures lies in stereotypes. Women's stereotypical behaviour is not considered as an institutional behaviour and we composed a major research question on stereotypes in chapter one. But what is stereotype? English and English (1958, p. 253) defined stereotype as "a relatively rigid and oversimplified or biased perception or conception of an aspect of reality, especially of persons or social groups." Stereotypes of women include submissiveness, dependency, fearfulness, passivity, and nonassertiveness. On the other hand, men are

stereotyped inflexibly in their aggressiveness, assertiveness, independence and competency (English and English, 1958, p. 253; Brehony, 1983, p. 117). Thus 'stereotypes' further aggravate the position of women in political power.

D'Amico and Beckman's (1995, p. 5) *gender-as-power* view assessed "gender as a socially constructed relationship of inequality" and different cultures create different gender differences. However, these differences represent the use of power by one group in society over the other, and socialising people into those differences maintains the unequal power relationship. The authors therefore, argued that masculine gender characteristics are more highly valued than feminine gender characteristics and that 'men' are more valued than 'women' (D'Amico and Beckman, 1995, p. 5). The source of unequal power relations is based on the fact that until modern times, the majority of women have been found in the private sphere. Their experiences in families, circles of friends, networks and neighbourhoods lead them to believe that politics is not the study of power but of communities in action. Thus the traditional feminine traits have been marginalised and largely excluded from the characteristics of formal power. In addition, stereotypical feminine behaviour is an underlying reason that women are undermined in exercising political power (Sapiro, 1983, p. 138; Solheim, 2000, p. 19).

However, all kinds of generalisations about women's stereotypes remain under scrutiny because they ignore an individual woman's ability and personal traits. Norris and Lovenduski (1995, p. 131) stated that:

On the one hand women may be seen as more honest, caring and less aggressive than men, on the other hand they may also be seen as unsuitable for politics if it is believed that they are less strong and decisive leaders, less knowledgeable about foreign policy issues or that they have less time for campaigning. Either way the female applicant is being judged on the basis of characteristics assumed about women as a group which may have no bearing on her personality and abilities.

But it is difficult to change people's perceptions and people often automatically assume that each member of a group fits the group stereotype, no matter the differences between them.

2.1.2.1 Sources of stereotypes

Stereotypes are important because people believe them. Unfortunately, some of them are rigid and that is the main source of many problems. For instance, political parties rarely nominate women to defence ministries because of the stereotype, even though an

individual woman may be as qualified as any man. Regarding the issue of stereotypes causing social problems like inequalities, Jussim et al., (1995, p. 18) disagreed. Instead, they suggested that group differences cause stereotypes. Among other factors, socialisation, segregation and opportunity structure cause both stereotypes and the inequalities which can further create individuals' stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. And these are the most important sources of social problems. In addition to socialisation, prejudice and discrimination exist in people's attitudes. Based on this, we can divide sources of stereotypes into two broad categories: *Socialisation* and *popular attitudes*. Through these two contributing factors, the impact of stereotypes will be analysed.

2.1.2.1.1 Socialisation as a source of stereotypes

Child (1954, p. 655) defined socialisation as,

....the whole process by which an individual born with behavioural potentialities of enormously wide range, is led to develop actual behaviour which is confined within a much narrower range - the range of what is customary and acceptable for him according to the standards of his group.

Again, to White (1977, p. 1), "at birth the individual human being is virtually helpless. Ahead lies a long and complicated process of learning to live in society. This process is socialisation." Both of these authors put stress on learning by the individual. For gender study, D'Amico and Beckman (1994, p. 3) argued that although different traits are linked to a particular biological sex, "most, if not all, gender characteristics are cultural creations, passed on to new members of a society through a process called socialisation." All of the above definitions indicate that socialisation is a learning process which differs among specific families, cultures, and classes, and tends to reflect the general values of the society. Stereotypes are not something inborn and inherent rather they are developed gradually. There are constant trends in the way stereotypes are acquired and perpetuated in schools, at the job and through the media. Sapiro has narrated how boys and girls are socialised in the USA during their childhood:

Power and conflict are processes and concepts of intrinsic importance to politics. Male and female children learn to engage in both power interactions and conflict in very different ways.....if one considers all forms of aggressiveness, boys and girls do not differ in their apparent need for power but boys are allowed more options for expression of aggressiveness, and thus conflict. Sex differences in styles of power and control behaviour begin to emerge during childhood. Children do, however, begin to associate power with men, despite the significance of female authorities such as mothers and teachers in their lives (1983, p. 44).

For political socialisation in particular, White argued that there is no rigorous formal framework of socialisation which induces people to adopt a particular political belief, and political socialisation is markedly absent in British and American schools. He went on to say that “it is in the family and especially in early adulthood, that the impact of political ideas, if only incidentally, plays a part in the learning process” (White, 1977, p. 86). And “political socialisation does not end with adulthood; it is a continuing process which may be affected by any major change in the life of the individual” (Flora and Lynn, 1974, p. 38).

2.1.2.1.2 Popular attitudes

Women are viewed according to stereotypes and to some extent people’s general attitudes compel women to show stereotypical behaviour. So how do people view the feminine gender in politics? It was an indication in chapter one that in political writings the political role of the feminine gender has been portrayed negatively by addressing women as passive and almost unsuitable for politics. To Randall (1987) women face covert institutionalised barriers due to this passive image. Political writings, for example, are drafted primarily for a male readership and in almost all political science literature “political theorists used explicitly male terms of reference, such as ‘he’ and ‘man’” (Okin, 1991, p. 72). Even Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, a woman, had failed to come out from the traditional notions of using male terms. In her classic book *The Concept of Representation* (1967), she had assumed all the legislative representatives were men. Thus theorists made gender questions peripheral to political analysis.

But why are women portrayed as unsuitable for politics? Certain factors still remain causal for women’s vulnerability. Referring to the particular fear of women who seem not to be fitting into a proper feminine stereotype, Townsend (1999a, p. 33) has given a hint that “fear and blame seemed very important in the way women limit themselves.” Fear and blame result from the public prejudice against women’s unfeminine roles. Women who behaved in nonstereotypical ways were perceived negatively by others and there was a persistent public prejudice about women engaged in political activities: they were considered unfeminine and believed to neglect their families. That old prejudice persisted after decades, as was evident from Dixon’s (1992, pp. 217-8) work. She stated that:

In the nineteenth century, cartoons made clear the assumption that women with an interest in public/political life were unfeminine and a threat to the family. This idea is clearly still present. Women who did enter parliaments in countries where that was possible in the early part of this century took great pains to ensure that they were not seen as aggressive or unfeminine, and they tended to promote issues concerning the welfare of women and children—issues often perceived as not political. The depiction of women in their roles as mothers, grandmothers and housewives is seen as allaying public fears that they are neglecting their proper duties in entering public life and they are unnatural women.

Women in politics are evaluated by two different standards: first the standard of femininity, and second, the standard of politics (Cohen and Giorgio, 1989; Sapiro, 1983). Due to their marginality, they have two choices. They may act in the political world according to the prevailing standards of politics and be seen as unfeminine, or they may view themselves and act in politics according to the standards of femininity and be seen as peculiarities. Carras (1995, p. 56) brought up the examples of the 'Iron Ladies' stating that "when female leaders do not fit the usual stereotypes, they are viewed as deviant versions of their gender and are derisively labelled 'Iron Ladies', as both Gandhi and Thatcher were." This scenario is related to the fact that whether for fear and blame, or women's inherent inclination, some women leaders care about feminine values only and are recognised as 'stereotypical women'. On the other hand, those who can adjust with the prevailing masculine political structure are termed 'superwomen'. It is noteworthy that Zellman (1976, p. 33) defined superwoman as "a woman who manages personally to resolve conflicts in order to fit into two or more institutions, usually at some cost to herself." But do we need superwomen at all? Kirkpatrick, a successful political woman is clear. She stated that:

"Political woman" is not grossly deviant from her female peers. She is not necessarily "masculine" in appearance or manner; she has not necessarily rejected traditional female roles and interests (Kirkpatrick, 1974, p. 219).

This implies that a combination of both masculine and feminine characteristics is desirable to be successful in politics. By demonstrating the life history data of successful women, Hall (1992, p. 34) argued that instead of becoming extremely feminine in beliefs, stable and secure women have combined female and male values. However, until now very few of the women leaders have been able to come out from their traditional boundaries because of people's negative attitudes. This applies to political men as well, but women are more vulnerable to these attacks because they are likely, in addition, to be attacked for compromising their essential femininity. Women are also less tolerant to this personal level attack (Dixon, 1992, p. 218). This particular

socialisation process is, therefore, considered a major factor and an important component in the social construction of gender.

Generally, stereotyping has the potentiality to make people biased towards some specific tasks. The apparent political stereotypical behaviour of women politicians is concerned with issues related to wages, maternity leave, day care and other social care reforms. In the issue debate, referring to the Australian welfare state, one Australian Senator, Janine Haines, mentioned that the so-called 'welfare' issues have become women's issues partly because more women than men receive age pensions and other welfare benefits which are seen as an extension of mothering (Haines, 1992, p. 189). Scandinavian women's passivity appears from Solheim's (2000, p. 19) findings that "women in politics tend to be stereotyped as naive especially in matters of defence and finance." In favouring only private sphere issues, women may not be considered powerful representatives, since finance, defence and foreign policy all bear a high value in politics. Therefore, at this stage, at least one significant reason for women's possible powerlessness in politics can be identified, that is, their issue preference, which makes them different from men and to some extent, reinforces stereotypes.

Nevertheless, whatever value the issues carry, women's issue preference was carefully weighed by the liberal theorist John Stuart Mill (1912) who asserted that women have interests, which must be taken into consideration, whatever sorts of differences may exist between the sexes. Mill's view is useful for our research as we can see women's traditional private sphere roles are now integrated into the public sphere as health, childcare and other social welfare activities through governmental agendas. We, therefore, intend to assess women legislators' power across issues. However, as dealing with multiple issues is an indication of diversified knowledge, it will be worth exploring whether women MPs' effectiveness differs between various issues.

Sapiro's model is highly important for our research as there is substantial but isolated evidence that has shown that women legislators direct their influence towards the benefit of a wide range of society particularly in social welfare sectors (Thomas, 1994). US researchers have pioneered this field. Not only Congresswomen but also many of the states' legislators have been included in their research. A number of researchers both in the US and UK found that men's and women's political agendas are significantly different and women legislators are more likely than men to act on bills

relating to children, women and families, and to serve on committees of health, welfare and other human services. Also more laws of benefit to children are passed when more women are in the legislatures (Saint-Germain, 1989; Lijphart, 1991; Thomas, 1991; Welch and Thomas, 1991; Lovenduski, 1997). With a few exceptions, women legislators are labelled as peacemakers (Rinehart, 1992, p. 163) and a growing proportion of women stress that issues of human welfare, peace and the environment should have the highest priority. Many in the USA and in New Zealand expressed those views in their own words (Wilson, 1992; Baysting et al., 1993; McCallum, 1993; Burrell, 1994). They not only expect to play a part but also adopt active roles towards their expected outcomes. Skjeie quoted in Solheim (2000, p. 60) stated that Norwegian women politicians tended to be against many defence projects. An example was women's opposition to the prepositioning of strategic nuclear missiles by NATO in Norway. Much the same applied to New Zealand women leaders; the political visibility of Helen Clark started with her support of the anti-nuclear movement. It seems people take different leadership paths. Some use grassroots networking, some use family influence and some of them use significant international issues such as the peace movement.

Although we may not entirely agree with the issue preference activities of women, there are reasons to believe that some negative consequences of these activities affect women's political ability. Displaying gender biases by women politicians may invite discriminatory comments, which may create further prejudice. For instance, Carlson (1990, p. 17) pointed out that during the primary campaign for California's Democratic gubernatorial nomination, former San Francisco Mayor Dianne Feinstein said that as a woman she would be more steadfast in her support of abortion than her pro-choice male opponent. For that temerity, she was called sexist. It seems gender stereotypes have some special implications and there is evidence, too, that to overcome overall political marginality and to avoid being confined to women's issues, women legislators are trying to widen their areas of interest and resist taking up traditional welfare tasks. Examples are Barbara Castle and Judith Hart in the UK and many more around the world (Stacey and Price, 1981; Sawer, 1994). Even Sapiro, who is a promoter of links between the two spheres, confessed that:

The fact that there is a relationship between public and private roles is not necessarily bad in and of itself. But....the private roles women are expected to perform as adults promote political marginality. In effect, women who establish families and take them as their central concerns in the early years of

their adulthood.....delay or restrict the possibility of becoming fully effective members of the political system (1983, p. 138).

This proposition reflects our view that women legislators should not be confined to issues that only affect them directly. Nor should their effectiveness be assessed only according to success in these areas. As legislators, they are, like men, responsible for the whole nation and thus for every issue.

The long discussion on private versus public roles created some propositions on specific barriers that: due to a different socialisation process women are different from men in exercising power; they are less aggressive; they serve in the softer portfolios and they show specific issue preferences which is seen as their stereotypical behaviour. In chapter three we examine how these barriers affect the contemporary women legislators' participation and effectiveness.

2.1.3 Cultural factors

The cultural impact of women's legislative participation and effectiveness is a major research question of this work. We have gathered information that cultural impact varies nation to nation and culture plays a crucial role in constructing gender socially. For example, Western women generally have more freedom and status than women in the Far East. In Muslim Central Asia and in Confucian China women are mostly excluded from public life. Thus cultural conservatism in certain societies is a direct barrier to women's political participation. The effects of culture can be enormously pervasive in constructing two different genders. To D'Amico and Beckman (1995, p. 3), "gender refers to characteristics linked to a particular sex by one's culture" i.e., gender concentrates on the differences between men and women that culture has created. The majority of cultures emphasise a dependent, and politically less competent image of women than men.

Culture not only determines the value society attaches to genders, but it indicates hierarchy in the family. Jones (1988, p. 15) quoted and criticised Hobbes for erasing married women from political roles by claiming that the family should be represented by one person and allowing for the conventional preference for the husband to prevail. It is also evident from Rosaldo's (1974, p. 36) study that women's status is lowest in those societies where they are placed under one man's authority in the home. Hall (1992, p. 89) asserted that "women's empowerment is least developed in the most

traditional patriarchal societies.” In addition, Kirkpatrick (1974, pp. 14-5) attributed significant weight to culture, as a tool hindering women’s political effectiveness. She stated:

Politics, it is argued, is a good example of arbitrary cultural exclusion. While legal barriers to women’s participation in political life have been abolished, cultural norms have preserved the definition of politics as “man’s work.”...culture is often said to affect women’s political behaviour by depriving them of the self-esteem necessary for political leadership. In a culture which values the male more highly than the female, women may never acquire the confidence and autonomy required to seek power or wield it effectively.

All three factors stated above, such as that men are highly valued, they are family heads and women are under their control, are an outcome of patriarchal culture and resemble current attitudes in many Third World countries including Bangladesh.

The dominant role of cultures is reflected in the work of Butler (1990, p. 8). She has taken the radical view that “when ‘gender’ is understood to be constructed by ‘culture’ in the same way that ‘sex’ is constructed by ‘nature’, then not biology but culture becomes destiny.” Cultural constraint remains the root cause for Bangladeshi women’s powerlessness. Norway is a country with a more egalitarian culture and values. Women have easier access to public life activities. New Zealand women apparently do not face insurmountable cultural barriers, although an exception is Maori women. Therefore, an examination has been carried out on the impact of culture in constructing gender in three selected countries in chapters four and seven. Also, assuming that women’s legislative participation, power and effectiveness are affected by culture, leads to the sub hypothesis that:

Cultural norms have a significant impact on women’s political effectiveness.

2.1.4 Religious factors

Religious norms can be a significant element in terms of barriers on women’s legislative participation and effectiveness, which is mentioned in chapter one. Therefore, the impact of different religions is a major area of this research. Often religious doctrines are used to justify sex role differentiation, a fact that is somewhat obscured by secularisation in the current cultures of the Western world. Religious beliefs are invoked to justify other systems of ascribed differentiation, such as the caste system and the distribution of power on the basis of racial differentiation. To Hall (1992, p. 102)

however, particular denominational or sectarian belief is not a major factor but overall all religions are powerful sources of women's subordination. She put it:

Although women may be motivated to pursue particular work as a vocation through their religion, as men are, women's roles in most religious settings are to obey and be devoted to the traditions of the religion and the family. Religion endorses family expectations, because religion needs to recruit its new members through the families who participate in their congregations.

Nonetheless, to show the direct and indirect impacts of religions on women's political power, major religious doctrines need to be addressed. In Christianity the Bible prescribed a differentiation of religious tasks between men and women. St Thomas proclaimed woman to be an 'imperfect man', an 'incidental' being (Beauvoir, 1949, p. xxxix). The notion of female inferiority appears prominently in religious teachings. Hunter (1976, p. 15) suggested that the image of woman as inferior, so prevalent in the classical and Judeo-Christian traditions, was further fostered by the moral practice of medieval culture. She noted:

Clergymen still refer to the teachings of Paul and the early church fathers to sanction the enduring exclusion of women from positions of power in their churches. The Bible still lends support to those seeking to justify the idea that women have no roles other than wife and mother.

Islamic doctrines have been interpreted in many different ways. Although the famous Egyptian Sunni thinker Muhammad al-Ghazali criticised males' oppressive attitudes towards women, AbuKhalil (1994, p. 129) stated that Ghazali accepted the inherently sexist content of Islamic texts and did not object to the exclusion of women from the top post of government that is, the Caliph position. This conviction contradicted the influential role played by Muhammad's favourite wife 'A'ishah. In the early 1950s, a political and religious controversy was created due to the demand for political rights by a group of Egyptian feminists. Some religious authorities vehemently asserted that Islam does not recognise women's political rights and a *fatwa* (a binding religious opinion) was declared by Al-Azhar:

The fatwa maintained that Islam granted women rights relative to private guardianship, such as the right to parenting and the right to oversee financial and waqf (religious charity) affairs. The opinion of Al-Azhar about political rights (public guardianship) was categorical, holding that public guardianship is an exclusively male realm (AbuKhalil, 1994, p. 129).

It seems that religious rules and norms mostly affect women in the Arab world. Women in Kuwait are still fighting for their voting rights. Religious fundamentalists often

criticised Muslim women on the ground that there is no provision for women to be state leaders in Islam. Not only in the Middle East for Muslim women generally face considerable opposition. As Hensman (1996, p. 57) stated, Pakistan, as an Islamic state, made the overall condition of the country especially disadvantageous to women. Therefore, despite the reserved seats for women in the parliament, Pakistani women can hardly advance because other religious and cultural factors remain. Despite criticisms and the opposition of fundamentalist Muslims in Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto's ascendance in power is an exception and a contribution of her influential father and his party.

In Hinduism, some have argued that religious doctrines against women are less prominent. According to Mukhopadhyay (1982, p. 23) Hinduism neither precludes nor deems it unnatural for women to participate in politics and to exercise legitimate power. Hensman (1996, p. 57) indicated a conspiracy that Hindu revivalism very cleverly adopted elements of feminist discourse by using symbols of female strength while in practice affirming the subordinate status of women. Thus they intended to establish the idea that Hindu women did not need liberation because they already had it within traditional Hinduism. However, Kumari and Kidwai (1998, p. 16) held Hinduism partially responsible for women's low power status in society. They stated:

Religious teachings are, to some extent, responsible for creating and reinforcing customs that contribute to the low status of women in society. Hinduism, the dominant religion in India, teaches young girls to model themselves on Sita, the wife of the mythological hero Rama, who followed her husband into the wilderness and never failed to do his bidding.

It thus appears that unlike Christianity and Islam, Hinduism has no strong overt religious stricture against women's political power. Why then does India perform so poorly in women's political representation? Mukhopadhyay (1982, p. 23) argued that rather than the outcome of Hindu beliefs and attitudes, sex differences in political participation may be primarily the result of cultural and political factors. Judging from the low number of women in the Indian parliament, two decades after Mukhopadhyay's findings, cultural and political factors remain dominant in India.

Surprisingly, it is mostly in the highly religious countries where women have achieved the top leadership positions. Despite cultural and religious handicaps, India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Pakistan have had women leaders at the top, which is not typical in terms of the vast majority of politically inactive women in those countries. In this, Katzenstein quoted in Mukhopadhyay (1982, p. 14) termed Indira

Gandhi 'the Mrs. Gandhi anomaly'. If we remember the dynamism of culture, it may be that 'modernisation', 'development', and 'westernisation', by altering traditional beliefs and attitudes, will raise women's overall status and increase their participation and power in the political sphere. These factors became a reality for Indira Gandhi, Benazir Bhutto and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as their families pushed them to acquire higher education in the Western world. On the other hand, special circumstances led Corazon Aquino, Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina to fill the political vacuum created by the assassination of their political husbands or father. All of these women politicians succeeded in spite of such dominant religions as Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. As their overall personal development was not typical of the stereotype of women in their countries, they can also be categorised as 'cultural anomalies'. In fact, politics is more personal and familial for them which is a predominant characteristic of South and Southeast Asian nations. Therefore, for all of the above leaders, class and family remain more important than gender. Richter's (1990-91, p. 528) assertion is significant:

Thus, the apparent contradiction between the overall status of women in Asian societies and the startling prominence of a few is less attributable to their having surmounted formidable barriers than their proximity to established male power.

However, it is interesting to note that the Muslim leaders conformed to the traditional Islamic *purdah* system. The religious stereotype of *purdah* is such a strong proscription in everyday life that even the highest executives conform to it.

The political roles of women in any religion cannot be approached from a generalist perspective because, for example, the status of Muslim women varies from one Muslim country to another. Evidence suggests that Arab women have less political freedom than women in other Muslim countries (AbuKhalil, 1994; Paxton, 1997). Reynolds's (1999) study of 180 nation states is relevant here where he found that religion is an important factor in explaining why nations with a strict Islamic background have often ranked at the bottom of the list in terms of women's parliamentary representation. He also demonstrated the greatest contrasts between dominant Christian countries and all other religions including Islam, Buddhist, Hindu, Judaic and Confucian. However, different denominations of Christianity, such as Protestantism and Catholicism also play a variety of significant roles in women's political participation. For example, Reynolds (1999) found a positive correlation with Roman Catholicism and the recruitment of women candidates. This may better explain that despite rigid patriarchy, a dominant

Catholic nation, the Philippines, showed relatively better representation of women in its parliament in the Asian region. In addition, despite the Latin American *marianismo* culture that promotes women's expression of patience, humility, sacrifice and submissiveness to the demands of men, Costa Rica and Argentina, also dominated by the Catholic population, produced the highest number of women in their legislatures in the Americas region. However, for the latter countries there may be some other positive institutional and structural sources of power. With a few exceptions like these, overall, religion plays a major role and this leads us to formulate a sub hypothesis that:

Religious norms have a significant impact on women's political effectiveness.

Thus far we have reviewed literature about societal barriers. These barriers affect both women's participation and effectiveness as legislative representatives. Participation is the first phase of entering the power structure. Liswood's (1999) concern is that women's passive Cinderella kind of attitude causes them to wait for others to rescue them causing lower participation. In this, women may lack the capability of using the direct language which is necessary for political power and effectiveness. Women's childbearing role restricts their physical attendance in public life activities, as childbirth and rearing children requires that they take time out from their careers. This kind of barrier particularly applies to participation in parliaments. On the other hand, the long term consequence of women's confinement at home with child care responsibilities limit them from acquiring self-confidence, which is ultimately necessary for exercising political power and for effectiveness. Similarly, due to a different socialisation process, women are more reluctant to put themselves forward for political office and that creates low participation. The same process of socialisation may also develop stereotypes so that women tend to show stereotypical issue preferences. The consequence of this is women's preference for 'softer' issues that may limit their exercise of power and effectiveness, creating a glass ceiling (Reynolds, 1999). Again, the FPP electoral system generally is not conducive to women and minority groups. Goetz (2001) believes that due to lack of women in the parliament, women cannot influence policies of concern to them. Women's political effectiveness is thus hindered.

Thus barriers to participation and barriers to effectiveness are sometimes identical as for the cases of child rearing and socialisation. Again, they are often closely linked with

other factors, electoral systems for example. These overlapping relationships and close connections of one to the other may reflect throughout our discussion.

Other than the societal barriers, there are other barriers that can affect women's access to legislative power. While legislators' effectiveness is largely assessed by their exercise of political power and influence, women's access in this arena is limited. We intend to examine those sources of legislative power which make women effective and able to exert an impact on political decision making.

2.2 Sources of power

We have seen in chapter one that power and effectiveness have an inherent relationship in terms of legislative representation. Also we have decided to use the working definition for effectiveness as the ability to exercise power to make an impact on public policies. The legislature, which is a product of politics, is a site of power. The legislators' career commitment is closely linked with an appreciation of the influence, prestige or status, attributed to the legislative role. Eulau, (1962c, p. 125) put it that "the lure of politics as a source of influence is seen as committing the politician to his career." There are many sources of power, some of which include: control of tangible resources, formal authority, expertise, control over knowledge and information, job and social status, wealth, referent power deriving from loyalty or friendship, and personal attributes (Wexley and Yukl, 1984, pp. 225-31).

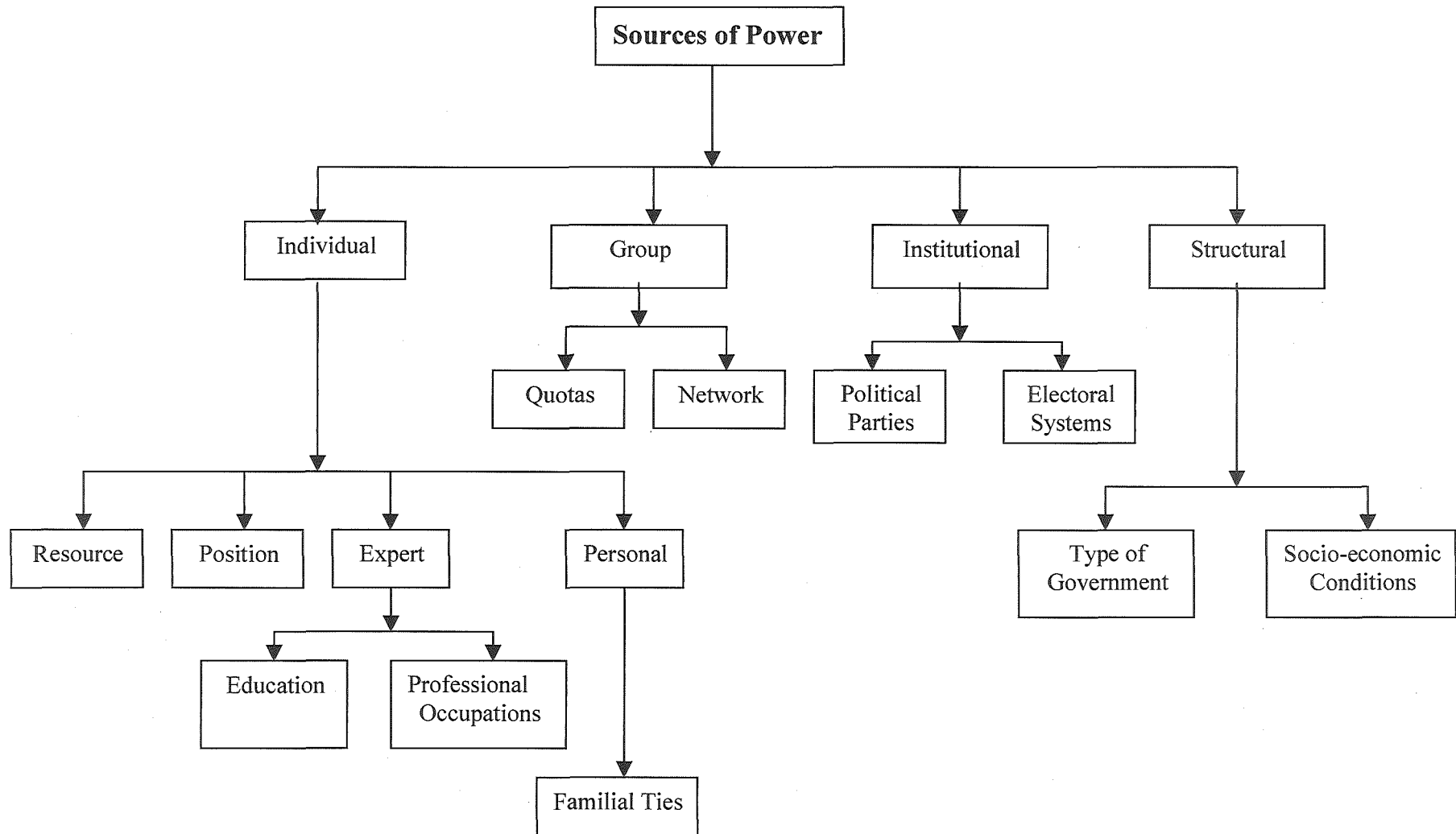
However, sources of legislative power vary from personal to collective and include institutional and structural. Clear demarcation among them is often hard; rather they are overlapping. For example, political parties can be sources of power in several ways. Parties are an important source of personal power as they provide training grounds for politicians, equip them with skills, knowledge and experience, and help them to build up a political career by educating and socialising the members in a political environment.

On the other hand, the parties have organisational power without which modern societies would probably be ungovernable. MPs act as representatives of political parties. They owe their election to their respective parties and are responsible to pursue party interests and values. However, in this particular study, political parties are placed as a source of institutional power from the viewpoint that it is an institution that can

give legitimacy to a democratic government. It is likely that in parliamentary systems such as New Zealand, all sources of political power at the national level may originate from political parties.

Most of the other sources of power, those we are going to discuss now are interrelated. However, for academic discussion, it is intended to divide sources of legislative power into four broad categories: *individual, group, institutional and structural*. The details of these sources summarised from the literature are demonstrated through a flow chart in table 2.2.

Table 2.2. Sources of power extracted from available literature



2.2.1 Sources of individual power

Handy (1976, p.113-9) mentioned five sources of individual power which give one the ability to influence others. They are physical, resource, position, expert and personal power. Except for physical power, all the sources are relevant for this study.

2.2.1.1 Resource power

As possession of valued resources is a useful basis for influence, resource power is one kind of power that leads to effectiveness. Usually, it is restricted and only a few people can control the resources. To make resource power useful Handy put forward two obvious preconditions: there must be control of the resources and those resources must be desired by the potential recipient. For example, a manager often has resource power that he can give to his subordinate, such as, promotion or pay increases. This is sometimes referred to as reward power and includes bonuses, granting of status, admission to a select committee. As proposed in chapter one we intend to assess women legislators' effectiveness against select committee positions from two perspectives. Firstly, the rates of women holding the chair of the committees. And secondly, whether women show stereotypical issue bias through select committee positions.

Among different legislative duties, parliamentary committees have great importance in legislatures, they influence the areas of legislative policy on which a legislator will concentrate. However the significance of committee assignments and roles vary between legislatures. There is a marked difference between presidential and parliamentary systems. For example, the US Congressional committees are independent, powerful, specialised and are the main sources of legislation. Committee chairs are assigned according to seniority, they are powerful, protective of their own territory and often become 'Congressional lions' (Hague et al, 1998, p. 188). The majority party usually monopolises the committee leadership and there is a tradition of over-representing ruling parties in chairmanship or on important committees. Members develop informal rights to be re-appointed to a Congressional committee and they serve indefinitely on the same committee.

What happens in other contemporary legislatures? Generally speaking, in party dominated parliaments, committees are less influential, such as in the British House of Commons. They do not challenge the making of legislation by the executives. Childs

(2002, p. 145) however, found that select committees in the British House of Commons are one of the places in the legislature where backbenchers can exert greater influence. There are, however, also differences among the parliamentary systems in various countries. For example, although Germany has an effective party system it also has strong legislative committees. It is the consequence of the need for coalition government to convince the assembly with the support of two or more parties. Scandinavian politics is also characterised by coalition governments. The general norm is, influential standing committees negotiate the policies and bills and the whole parliament votes on them later (Heywood, 1997; Hague et al, 1998). In the Scottish parliament, as Brown et al (2002, p. 75) suggested, parliamentary committees play an important role in holding the executive to account by monitoring policies. The committees also have the power to initiate legislation. The committees in the Australian House of Representatives are weak but they are relatively stronger in the Senate. This is because, the House of Representatives is party and executive dominated, whereas, the Senate, elected by Proportional Representation, is less dominated by the government. Sawyer (2001b, p. 182) acknowledged the committee system of the Australian Senate as strong, and in recent years women have dominated the chairing of committees.

For women legislators, important committee assignments can be a basic ingredient of their effectiveness. According to Gehlen (1969, p. 36):

Politically, committee assignments are significant because they determine how much legislative help it is possible to give one's constituents. Also, some committee seats are much better places to begin a climb to leadership than others. If the men do not want women participating fully in the Congress or holding positions of authority, one of the best ways would be to refuse them decent committee assignments.

Gehlen gave us a hint that some committees are considered as leadership ladders. There is a widespread belief that women receive undesirable committee assignments. To Kirkpatrick (1974, p. 125-6), undesirable committees are those desired by no one because their influence is limited and their subject matter is presumed to be especially suited to women. Women may be systematically excluded from the powerful committees, and sent onto the less influential committees regardless of their interests, expertise and preferences. Committees related to women's issues are considered less desirable. Discrimination plays a key role, and is a barrier to achieving effectiveness. Thomas (1994, p. 36) identified sexism, stereotyping and being taken less seriously than men, for the predominance of women in health, education and social welfare

committees rather than in finance and defence as a few of the discriminatory hurdles facing women legislators in the US. Although women are sometimes faulted for showing biases for certain committees, it is not always women who choose a particular set of tasks. We learned from McCallum (1993) that the earliest women MPs in New Zealand were often given tasks of direct concern to women because men ignored them. Even with the highest representation of women legislators, the Nordic countries are no exception to this practice of placing women predominantly into social welfare sectors. It seems both these elements, that is, women's special issue preference and women's placement into certain stereotypical areas, may be barriers in the sense of limiting women legislators' range of effectiveness.

On the other hand, a desirable committee assignment is one which accords to the legislator's preference. It puts a woman legislator in a position to exert influence according to her greatest interest. But how far is there a universal standard of what constitutes a powerful or desirable committee? Referring to the case of the US, Arnold (1979, p. 125-7) stated that most members apparently find the armed services committee a rewarding place. It tends to attract two types of Congressmen. Some of them like defence policy, and others, defence benefits. Those who already have military installations in their districts are almost certainly interested in benefits. Those who have no installations in their districts are more likely to be motivated by policy concerns. A defence committee may be highly attractive in a super power like the US but the vast majority of nations have different priorities. For example in a country like Costa Rica, where there is no military at all, a defence committee would carry little weight. In Norway hardly anybody believed that service on defence helped members serve their districts (Matthews and Valen, 1999, p. 159).

Among our three proposed countries, the Storting committees in Norway are unusually powerful for a parliamentary system but they are not as powerful or autonomous as those in the US Congress. They do not initiate any legislation and they coexist with highly disciplined parliamentary parties. The committees are considered in terms of power sharing between the parties, government and Storting. The allocations of committee positions are worked out through negotiations between party leaders. Proportionality of parties is ensured in both the chairmanship and general membership positions in committees. Members' preferences and qualifications are then considered along with the party needs. Therefore, the opinion of the standing committee leaders

may not be in agreement with government policy. Unlike the US Congress, most committees show frequent changes in membership with only a few longer serving members (Matthews and Valen, 1999).

Unlike many other legislatures, the Bangladesh parliament does not enjoy free authority as the constitution imposes limits on its power. The arbitrary exercise of power by the parliament can be subjected to judicial review, except for money bills. Thus the parliament is of limited effectiveness as a policy making body. The parliament is essentially a plenum-oriented institution. Most of its activities are debated on the floor of the House and only a small proportion is referred to committees. Again, party leaders usually allocate the positions in different committees. Previous professional background is one of the considerations for nominating the committee members but it is not mandatory. Although members have reasonable liberty in decision making in the committees, the party leaders decide who will speak in the debates just to ensure that the members follow the party lines in the House. However, due to the country's authoritarian past, the dominance of the government remains widespread in the legislative process and the parliament plays a marginal role. Committees' recommendations are rarely discussed, debated or accepted in the House. Many MPs use their committee positions for financial gains and for other personal benefits (Ahmed, 1998, p. 59). After the general election in October 2001 no standing committees were formed until November 2002. This signifies the relative ineffectiveness of committee activities of Bangladesh's parliament even though parliament sat from December 2001.

In New Zealand, under the majoritarian system, the House delegated power to select committees and they play a stronger role in the content of legislation. Under MMP, the role of select committees has appeared to be more significant as a greater number of inquiries have been carried out by them. Without receiving any direction from the House of Representatives, select committees are empowered to initiate their own inquiries. One aspect of ensuring the accountability of government under MMP is the expectation of the attendance of ministers before the select committee hearings on estimates (Palmer and Palmer, 1997; McGee, 2001).

Although significant power differences appeared in committee activities between presidential and parliamentary systems, we may find examples in the case of the New

Zealand parliament where, for example, some women MPs consistently tried to get a position in the powerful finance committee. It seems assessing women's political effectiveness through committee assignments is a worthwhile task.

2.2.1.2 Position power

Often called 'legal' or 'legitimate' power, this is the power that comes as a result of role or position in an organisation. The right to information, right of access and the right to organise are some invisible assets of position power. For example, it is hard to exert influence without access to the bodies to be influenced. Like resource power, position power is also confined only to a few people, those who head up the pyramid of the organisation. Handy equated position power with authority as being legitimised power. This kind of power resides in the position rather than in the individual. Heads of state and ministers are examples of the position power holders.

But are all ministries equally powerful? If power resides with the position then individual personality may not be a factor. However, in reality, both position and personality are judged according to power. Some critics have categorised cabinet positions into "softer" and "tougher", low politics and high politics and found that usually women are allocated softer portfolios such as education, health and child welfare (Carras, 1995; Reynolds, 1999). Also, to Reynolds (1999), economic planning, foreign affairs and national security are stepping-stones for national leadership positions and women usually lack these positions. These propositions of Carras and Reynolds lead us to address whether women need the said stepping-stones to reach the top. (See chapter three).

We may see that "softer" or "tougher", whatever the critics say, it may be one can exercise position power from any portfolio. Examples of women cabinet ministers and heads of states are not rare these days. It is therefore, essential to examine their path to power. Cabinet position is one of the first determinants for assessing the power of women legislators in this research. For all the three countries this issue has been addressed in the following chapters.

2.2.1.3 Expert power

This is the power vested in someone because of that person's acknowledged expertise. To Handy, it is the least objectionable source of power because in a meritocratic

tradition people do not dislike being influenced by experts. However, expert power is comparative in that anyone is an expert who knows more than anyone else involved. The advantage of an expert is that even a small difference in expertise can give him/her power over his/her fellows in a demanding situation.

Buchanan (1962, p. 214) recognised subject matter experts or specialists as powerful legislators because through specialisation, an individual legislator brings his/her personal competence in a subject matter field to a group and that appears to be a characteristic of the effective functioning of legislatures. Experts are considered more powerful and effective actors in legislatures as more of their bills pass. Buchanan made it clear through this statement:

The experts appear, to some extent at least, to be responsible to their fellows for exercising restraint in their espousal of their personal interests. Thus they help others distinguish "reality" or "technical knowledge" from "values," "preferences," or "political knowledge" in areas unfamiliar to them. In recompense for their efforts they are given the confidence of their fellows - their bills go through, they shape policy - they have power (Buchanan, 1962, p. 215).

Therefore, expert legislators are not only there to show their expertise but are also responsible for influencing other members' personal interests. This dual role is an indication of expertise and leadership, which can be hard for any legislator to achieve and exert.

Buchanan tried to show not only the existence of subject matter expertise but also a positive correlation between the complexity of the subject matter and power. This implies that a legislator who works on complex subjects like law and finance, is potentially more powerful. However, what about other areas? According to him:

The fields of law and finance.....have two common characteristics. First, they are complex and technical. Second, they involve the two important techniques - law writing and budgeting - through which the legislature exercises control over the economy, the society and the government. The ranking of the other fields appears to be more in order of their importance than of their complexity (Buchanan, 1962, p. 199).

Even these days, law remains an attractive area among legislators. Presumably lawyers have relevant training and skills which they use to enact legislative laws. However, this particular subject matter preference seems to apply mainly to the West and in particular to the US where law is the most common professional background (Hague et al., 1998,

p. 19; Norris and Inglehart, 2000, p. 10). Other parts of the world may not show the same tendency as Olson stated:

In American politics, lawyers are the most frequently found occupational group among legislators and congressmen.....Activity in partisan politics and holding elective office is a recognised means for lawyers to obtain judicial positions.....The postlegislative career pattern could attract lawyers to the legislature in the first place.....By contrast, however, lawyers are almost completely absent from the Danish parliament. In that country, lawyers rise to a judicial position within the Ministry of Justice. Participation in politics in Denmark is itself a full-time career and would detract from a lawyer's full-time service within the Ministry. From this contrast between two countries, we can hazard the guess that the means of advancement to what lawyers most seek – judgeships – is a critical factor that leads lawyers to run for elective office or not (Olson, 1980, pp. 99-101).

Thus preference for law does not seem to be universal, the situation varies from country to country. Lawyers are a predominant group in the US, but were virtually absent from communist nations' parliaments. Businessmen were the largest groups in most parliaments outside of Eastern Europe and landowners were a large group in Third World parliaments as in Pakistan (Olson, 1980). Although law may well be one of the instruments of power, it appears that Buchanan's assertion about the subject of law as a source of power is not constant. Again, if we consider area of expertise as a sole agent of power, why are women not considered as experts on family matters? More women's presence in social welfare kind of committees would be an explanation that women are experts in these areas but we have seen earlier that family and children's issues are devalued in general. Also as women legislators came out from the private sphere, their private sphere roles reinforced 'stereotypes' and unfortunately, these roles never counted as 'expertise' because of people's stereotypical beliefs of women's incompetence in general. Johnson (1976, p. 104) explained the situation:

Expert power is based on having superior skills or knowledge, and trustworthiness. Since men are the acknowledged experts in our society – even in areas considered “feminine” (viz., cooking, childrearing, sewing, teaching, art, and literature) – expert power should be seen as quite out of role for women. It should be attributed to men.

However, knowledge of a broad range of fields can overrule the expertise issue. Although expertise on a particular subject matter seems to be a concrete source of power, not every legislator has to have it. Personal knowledge and intelligence is another source of influence as Kirkpatrick (1974, p. 129) stated “knowledge, they seem to be saying, is power. At least it is the key [to] credibility and authority in committee and on the floor.” In addition, Matthews and Valen asserted “knowledgeable members tend to have the most influence on legislative outcomes” (1999, p. 164). Therefore,

every legislator is expected to be competent. General knowledge and competence are thought to originate from education and occupational experience.

2.2.1.3.1 Education

Women's progress in attaining political power surely depends, at least in part, on the degree of progress they have made outside politics (Randall 1987; Chafetz, 1991). One important area is likely to be education. Many women lack the resources of education, which seem necessary for an equal political position with men and this may influence their political outlook. An empirical study in South Korea conducted by Wade and Seo (1996, p. 44) suggested that as education increases women become more politically aware and interested and more assertive and active in political discussions and participation. In their own language:

Education provides substantive information, enhances critical reasoning, provides concepts necessary for the understanding of discrete or ostensibly unrelated facts, instructs in the gathering and management of information, increases self-assurance and, withal, reveals how one is connected to the broader society.

Educational credentials have long been a key feature distinguishing political elites from ordinary citizens (Putnam, 1976; Loewenberg and Patterson, 1979); hence, education may be important in expanding the pool of women who feel qualified and motivated to stand for office.

Regarding effectiveness, Kishwar (1996a, p. 17) delivered proof for the Indian *Panchayats* (lowest tier of local government) that most uneducated women members feel helpless and incapable in interpreting and handling bureaucratic rules, accounts and procedures. Therefore, the government appoints male assistants who simply take control of the *Panchayats*. However, there is also evidence that the highly educated Indian State of Kerala contributed the lowest number of women in state and central governments (Kishwar, 1996a, p. 13). This reminds us of other research findings that women's educational attainment does not have an effect on legislative participation and power. Socio-economic conditions and political culture played more significant roles than educational qualifications (Moore and Shackman, 1996). Therefore, we will examine women legislators' educational qualifications and check whether it has a possible effect on their participation and influence in legislatures in the three selected countries.

2.2.1.3.2 Professional occupations and labour market participation

If women are disproportionately found in disadvantaged positions in the social structure, they will not have the resources necessary to gain political power (Paxton, 1997, p. 444). The greater the share of women in professional occupations, the larger we should expect women's share to be in the parliament. Women's political opportunities and power are also likely to depend in part upon their labour force activity. Women who work outside the home tend to participate more actively in politics. Jobs can provide funds to help launch political campaigns; they can yield political contacts; and they may offer an organisational basis for political activity through business groups and unions. Higher rates of female labour force participation may thus lead to a larger number of motivated and well-connected female candidates willing to stand for office. This is likely to result in increased numbers of elected female representatives and in greater strength as well.

However, this may not be the same across nations. Matland (1998b) found a contrasting scenario between industrialised and Least Developed Countries (LDC). He put it,

...in industrialized countries women who previously worked in the home and have now moved into paid work outside the home are the primary cause of the increase in women's labor force participation.... Moving into the paid labor force, often into low paying or public sector unionized jobs, has a consciousness raising effect on women's political participation and their propensity to articulate political demands. While women's labor force participation rates are quite high in many LDCs, this is largely due to women's presence in subsistence-level primary sector work. This work is quite unlikely to have the same empowering and consciousness raising effect. Labor force participation does not mean the same thing in these two worlds, and therefore it is not surprising that the effects are different (Matland, 1998b, p. 118).

From Matland's proposition, the socio-economy of any nation appears to be a dominant factor for political participation. There appears to be another important political resource that is linked with occupation. During the 1970s Jaquette found that the leaders were largely businessmen and professionals in US politics. But Congresswomen came from the field of teaching rather than law or business unlike male legislators. She argued that "Unless women can attain importance in these feeder hierarchies, they will never amount to much in government" and will not emerge as leaders (Jaquette, 1974, p. xxviii). This trend is still prevalent in the US. Similar research findings produced by Norris (1997) showed that elected political officials in

the UK are frequently drawn from professional occupations. Lawyers and business professionals tend to be heavily overrepresented in parliament

Professionals are considered in advantageous positions in the sense that they are likely to be well educated, practised in public speaking, and familiar with the political system and the law, which helps them to be effective legislators. A work career may result in enhanced confidence and independence, and therefore in a greater sense of political efficacy. Again, specific subject areas and occupational backgrounds not only enhance political participation but in some nation states they are the prerequisites for powerful positions and effectiveness. Rosenthal (1998, p. 52) stated that more men hold the positions of committee chairs in the US states' legislatures because men are twice as likely to have acquired an advanced professional degree in law, medicine or business. In contrast, women are three times more likely to be schooled in the more integrative modes of community and volunteer leadership.

Education, occupation and labour force participation are very relevant for this study as women legislators in New Zealand and Norway are highly educated and involved in various professions. Women in Bangladesh possess a low profile both in terms of education and the professions. It is therefore, essential to test whether background profession is an indicator for effectiveness or not for our proposed countries. To fill out the gaps in this area a sub hypothesis can be formulated that:

Professional occupations and labour market participation are important sources of political effectiveness.

2.2.1.4 Personal power

Personal power is sometimes called charisma or popularity. This resides in the person and in her/his personality. It can be enhanced by a person's position or expert status. However, Handy suggested that because charisma is tied to the individual rather than the position, personal power is much sought after. It seems Handy followed Max Weber who stated "the term 'charisma' will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities" (Weber, 1947, p. 329). In primitive circumstances prophets were usually termed charismatic by which Weber meant the genuine meaning of charisma, 'gift of

grace' (Weber, 1947, p. 330). To him, charismatic political and religious movements exhibited personal authority in its most extensive form and their popularity disappeared soon after their death and the 'problem of succession' was considered critical to the survival of charismatic movements. Following this, Wrong (1979, p. 63) cited the example of Hitler and Mussolini as charismatic political leaders because both of their established regimes were overthrown shortly after their death. Johnson discouraged the uses of this kind of personal power mode:

Unfortunately, the use of personal resources is another power mode that is often effective only in the short run. It limits the user to those areas of influence that are affected by a personal relationship, and leaves him or her highly dependent on others (1976, p. 102).

It seems personal power is less desirable in the political world because it places the emphasis more on an individual's personality. However, "Talcott Parsons, Edward Shils and Robert Nisbet have broadened Weber's concept of Charisma by treating it not only as an attribute of persons but also of positions or roles, associations, and institutions" (Wrong, 1979, p. 62), because when a charismatic person holds a position, the position is regarded as more valuable. Again, when a popular charismatic leader retires or resigns from a position, that position loses some of its weight. However, charismatic leadership is not an outcome of normal political practice. Blondel (1990, p. 136) argued that it occurs when the political, social and economic structure of a particular nation faces major challenge. This kind of power is evident mostly in developing or Third World countries. In Southeast Asia personal power, is seen as the salient characteristic (Anderson, 1990; Trankell and Ovesen, 1998). These authors suggested that charisma should be seen not primarily from a Weberian sociological and psychological perspective, but rather as a cultural fact, which rests on a belief in the power of a charismatic personality.

Charisma is necessary to increase women's own self-reliance and internal strength (Townsend, 1999a, p. 30). We have noted there is so much doubt about women's self-esteem and willpower, and personal power is essential to build up an individual's self-confidence and self-esteem both for participation and to exercise power as a leader in groups. It has been a rare circumstance for women leaders to be charismatic although there are debates whether Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher and Golda Meir were charismatic leaders. However, they relied more on their actions than their popularity. It seems these leaders are evaluated negatively against their personal charisma. For

instance, they are termed as culturally 'anomalous', 'shrewd and ruthless', 'iron ladies' and so on (Mukhopadhyay, 1982; Carras, 1995; Raaum, 1995). However, some specific factors are considered to be great contributors in achieving personal power. Among them family connection is significant and distinct.

2.2.1.4.1 Family connections

Being brought up in a political family will encourage a sense of personal and political efficacy, therefore, familial ties, as a source of individual political power are long established and also well recognised. Thus political families can contribute to both the participation and effectiveness of legislators. It is likely that legislators tend to come from families that are heavily involved in politics. Eulau (1962d, p. 82) mentioned that:

An interest in politics is probably related to the opportunity to hear about it or directly experience it. Thus, having parents, relatives, or close friends in politics is likely to facilitate an individual's own awareness of and familiarity with public affairs.

The above assumption was common for past women MPs. Stacey and Price (1981, p. 157-8) stated that the importance of coming from a political family may be relatively greater for a woman than for a man, because of the strong weight of tradition against women entering politics. Relevant statistics showed by Darcy et al., (1987, p. 79) stated that:

In the years 1916-1940 some 56 percent of the women elected to the House of Representatives were widows of congressmen who had served in that district. Between 1941 and 1964 this figure declined to 40 percent, and between 1965 and 1974 the figure was 30 percent. The proportion of congressional widows among the women elected to Congress has continued to drop since then.

The widows had often campaigned with their husbands and they were familiar to both voters and local elites. With these advantages they were quite unlike other candidates running for an open seat, male or female. By using family resources Nancy Astor replaced her husband through a by-election and became the first woman to sit at Westminster on 1 December 1919. In New Zealand, Elizabeth McCombs became the first woman in parliament in 1933 in the seat held by her husband until his death (McCallum, 1993, p. 1).

Even in the new millennium, Hillary Clinton's appearance as a Senator is one of the most significant examples of familial ties in politics. Family connections in legislatures

are still important in the West and not only for women. The Kennedys, George W. Bush and Al Gore all came from political families. The difference between men or women on this issue is that all of these men had political experience at the state levels in contrast to women. Bringing less experienced widows and daughters into legislatures has now almost disappeared from the Western world; it is however, still particularly marked in South and Southeast Asia. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Indira Gandhi, Benazir Bhutto, Khaleda Zia, Sheikh Hasina, Corazon Aquino, Megawati Sukarnoputri and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo all have exerted influence and power that they have inherited from their families.

D'Amico (1995, p. 22) divided contemporary women leaders into three categories according to their paths to power. They are surrogates, insiders/climbers and outsiders/activists. Indira Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto are termed as surrogates because they inherited the mantle of power from their politically martyred fathers. At the same time, they are insiders/climbers because they rose through the party hierarchy. They are also outsiders/activists because they asserted their qualifications for office based on their experience. The *patrician* origin helped these leaders to overcome traditional barriers as Benazir's rich and influential family background enabled her to transcend gender. Carras (1995, p. 48) named it as a 'blend' which is more common in the Third World than in the West. Solheim (2000, p. 105) confirmed that women such as Aquino, Bhutto and Chamorro could not have ascended to the top without their famous husbands or fathers which he called an 'appendage syndrome'. As for those who are selected as replacements for their husbands and fathers, such as Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Khaleda Zia, Sheikh Hasina and Corazon Aquino, D'Amico (1995, p. 18) named this path 'the widow's walk.' Thus the trend of women leaders' power path in the South and Southeast Asian countries described by Richter (1990-91, p. 538) was that South and Southeast Asian powerful women leaders did not have an institutional base, rather they were 'accidental leaders'. Do accidental leaders exercise power differently? We intend to assess their effectiveness in subsequent chapters.

2.2.2 Sources of group power

Although personal power is a basis for one's self-reliance and confidence, collective power is the desirable mode of power for legislative functions. Kirkpatrick (1974, p. 4) stated that:

Politics is an activity carried on in the name of collectivities. The possession and use of power is always justified with reference to some collectivity.....and demands are made in the name of groups.

The continuous emphasis by women activists and feminists on increasing women's numbers in parliaments does not mean that more women can abruptly change the legislative pattern, but that they can work together on the policies that usually affect them. Numerical figures and influence have a positive co-relation as one or two influential women legislators alone could not bring any crucial change. Raaum (1995, p. 29) argued that "participation does not guarantee real influence. However, it is, if nothing else, a necessary prerequisite to influencing public policy." Therefore, a formula of a threshold greater than 30% membership of the legislature is commonly considered the 'critical mass' necessary for women to exert a substantial influence on politics through sponsoring bills and chairing committees. It is also expected that once women reach critical mass parliament would become more feminine, women friendly and more women's issues would be included in the political agenda (Kathlene, 1994, p. 574; UN, 1995, p. 41; Grey, 1999, p. 148).

It may have appeared that increasing the number is the only aim of group formation. But the logic behind numerical strength is collective action which is directly related with numbers. A number of ways have already been demonstrated to be successful in increasing women's numbers in legislatures ultimately resulting in their increased power and influence. They are (i) quotas and reserved seats in political parties and legislatures and (ii) developing women's networks. Wängnerud (2000) named these two sources of power as the best strategies for the Nordic women's level of representational success. Under the network, she particularly mentioned the party-linked women's federations, which is a particular practice in Nordic countries. We indicated earlier that without any quotas and reserved seats, New Zealand women achieved a significant level of legislative representation. Party linked women's federation is not a practice in New Zealand. Does this mean that New Zealand women's success is due to the contribution of systems in the sense of Wängnerud, such as culture and electoral system? This leads us to develop a sub hypothesis that:

Systems rather than strategies are the key to success behind women's significant legislative representation in New Zealand.

2.2.2.1 Quotas and reserved seats in political parties and legislatures

Use of quotas and reserved seats for minority groups are quite common and women are included among those groups. However, women are a 'political' minority rather than a 'numerical' minority, which can be found everywhere across countries (Lijphart, 1999, p. 280). To reduce the gender gap and to increase the numerical representation of women in parliaments, many countries have adopted quotas and reserved seats. Some countries use them in parliaments and others in political parties. Scandinavian countries are exemplary in bringing more women in parliaments by using quotas in political parties.

Quotas impose restrictions forcibly or voluntarily and are usually justified on the grounds that protection leads to a rapid increase of women's representation in politics. The promoters of 'politics of presence' or 'group representation' are in favour of quotas and reserved seats in order to meet democratic requirements and to correct the past discrimination against marginalised groups (Young, 1990; Goetz, 2001; Phillips, 1995, 2001). When women come through quotas it does not necessarily mean that they can act independently to influence policy, although sometimes, even as tokens, they can symbolise potentially expanded political roles for women. These women should be able to participate in the decision-making process of parties and thereby develop necessary skills, which afterwards enable them to become expert members of the legislatures.

Gender quota laws are an increasingly popular method of addressing the legislative underrepresentation of women in many contemporary legislatures. Argentina, Taiwan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal are examples of nations introducing quotas and reserved seats in parliaments. However, quotas for underrepresented groups represent a complicated and controversial issue, which in the US has seen a conservative backlash against affirmative action programmes of the civil rights and women's movement. Rather than affirmative action, it is characterised as 'positive discrimination' (Kelber, 1994, p. 28). This view echoes Paul (1993, p. 258) who accused supporters of affirmative action of embracing rigid quotas based on uniform characteristics, where appointments are based on racial and gender qualities. He argued, the beneficiaries of affirmative action are incapable of competing in a fair game and in effect, are charity cases.

Although quotas and reserved seats have made a direct contribution towards increasing women's number in the parliaments, these quota-based MPs may not exert power and

influence equally with the mainstream elected women MPs. Also reserved seats and quotas have been a subject of debate, because male legislators have a tendency to ignore women MPs who enter parliament by way of reserved positions. Indicating the extent of negligence some appointed women legislators in South Korea compared their positions to those of 'illegitimate children' (Soh, 1993, p. 81). She described how women legislators in the Korean parliament have been appointed for a one-term honour, therefore, most of them keep a low profile and do not engage in active politicking. Moreover, since the major role of an appointed legislator is to serve the party, in general they have played an integral part in rubber-stamping government proposed bills. Soh went on to say how the 'Family Law' bill in the 11th National Assembly was not passed due to women legislators' powerlessness. All the appointed women legislators from the ruling party voted against the bill in accordance with the party policy. However, they stated during interviews that they were personally in favour of revising the Family Law, which has been a major issue for women's right's activists for decades. Even though they were appointed to represent women's interests, there was little that appointed women legislators could actually do on their own to enhance women's status under the prevailing political culture. Even their speeches were allocated according to their nomination process. In the 9th National Assembly (1973-1979), there were ten appointed assemblywomen, but only one was ever allowed an opportunity to make a formal speech.

We intend to compare the system and strategy approaches of Wängnerud (2000) where she found that due to the egalitarian values of political elites of Nordic states, the introduction of quotas for women in political parties faced less resistance. It was the first of the two best strategies that helped Nordic women to achieve striking legislative representation. Women's activities are another strategy that proved to be highly effective. The scenario of Korean political elites contrasts with that of the Nordic states. A similar scenario appears in Taiwan as Chou and Clark (1994, p. 162) mentioned that *Fu Nu Huei* is the only qualified women's organisation in Taiwan responsible for filling the women's quota in the National Assembly. But the National Assembly has been subject to manipulation by the dominant Nationalist Party which has had very close ties to *Fu Nu Huei* and ultimately the selected women had to play a role on behalf of the then ruling party. Thus the appointed or indirectly elected women legislators who enter parliament through reserved seats or quotas as in Bangladesh, Taiwan, Pakistan, Korea and elsewhere, are often restricted in their actions.

Cohen (1989, p. 223) stated, “a quota serves to help women catch up with men and thus promotes equality; it stereotypes women in politics and reinforces the image of the marginalised group.” Even the beneficiaries themselves raised concerns, for instance, the women MPs of Tanzania regard a 15% quota allocation for them as inappropriate. They claim that the quota system merely promotes laziness, and that under a quota system women are identified according to their gender rather than qualifications (Njuguna, 1999). Mazur (1991, p. 131) stated that the use of quotas was firmly rejected by the state feminists CWW (Committee on Women’s Work), the tripartite Baudoin Report and the Constitutional Council of France on the grounds that the potential to discriminate against women as well as men outweighed the benefits of a quota system. It is noteworthy however, that some of the oldest democracies such as France and the UK have finally decided to introduce equal quotas for men and women allowing all-women shortlists to increase the number of women in legislatures (*The Economist*, 2000; Electoral Commission, 2002).

However, we mentioned in chapter one that special strategies and enumerated sources of power may not equally affect all nations. Quotas are only one of the mechanisms to increase women’s representation. Unless accompanied by other changes, there would not be any substantial impact of quotas. For instance, despite reserved seats for the last few decades, Bangladesh and Pakistan do not show any significant change or increase in the number of women in their parliaments because of cultural and social conservatism (Kelber, 1994, pp. 26-7). Therefore, Nash’s (1998, p. 52) proposition seems to be appropriate here:

Quota systems may not, then, have very much effect on the lives of women, other than those few elected to parliament, either at the beginning of the process of getting more women elected, or at the end, in policy-making. They would, however, in singling women out for special treatment, risk freezing, or even creating, a group identity of women in politics.....and thus hindering change in other areas.

Quotas remain controversial but have proved to be beneficial for certain countries. Bergmann asserted that quotas are absolutely necessary if there is to be any progress. At the same time, she confessed that quotas were not without problems, and due to the legitimate worry of future ‘balkanization’ (1997, p. 229), quotas should be limited to a very small number of groups. A similar opinion came from Jones and Navia (1999, p. 341) that larger quotas (e.g., 40% instead of 25%) are unlikely to be significantly more

effective, suggesting that advocates should opt for smaller quotas, which will meet less legislative resistance. To increase the acceptability of quotas, another way suggested by some critics is that they should be a temporary measure and abolished once the desired goal of proportional representation is achieved (Hildebrandt, 1990; *The Hindu*, 1997). This has been proved successful in the case of Norway. However, the impact of quotas and reserved seats will be thoroughly considered in Bangladesh and Norway in chapter seven.

2.2.2.2 Network/pressure groups/women's movement

One type of important collectivity are women's groups, which are thought to originate from women's homogeneous interests, interests based on women's issues. We noted both in chapter one and a little earlier that women's activities in and outside parties in Nordic countries have been proved one of the two most successful strategies. But this strategy not only works to increase women's number, it has a vital impact on women's effectiveness. Although numbers may be a factor, organisations are also of vital importance. Among the pressure groups, Col (1981, p. 186) stated that women's networks have political consequences not only for the influence on policy that they might exert, but also for the experience of co-operative behaviour, organisational strategies and leadership skills gained by the participants. In her own language:

When relatively powerless individuals join together in a mutual-aid group, they strengthen each other, aggregate resources, heighten awareness of mutual problems and abilities, and create possibilities for future action. Although the mobilisation of previously powerless groups can be disruptive of existing power structures, the process of educating, training and empowering persons ultimately must lead to a stronger political system involving more persons committed to it. Furthermore, such networks link the individual and society as a whole, thereby decreasing anomie. Because women have been victims of isolation and at best tokenism, networks which link women to each other are an important step towards integrating women into the active sectors of society.

Not only that, networking can enhance women's awareness, and the size and strength of a vibrant women's movement is a societal factor that may influence a country's degree of gender inequality in political representation (Sainsbury, 1993; Bystydzienski, 1995). Nations with organisations that are active in pressing for social, economic, and political equality tend to make more progress and have more women running for political office, and voters are more likely to be willing to elect them. Siim (1991, p. 188) argued that the strength of the political mobilisation of women outside the formal political system is one important factor influencing women within the political elite. The strength of independent organisations of women inside political and administrative institutions is

another factor influencing the political will of women politicians. Both factors tend to unite and empower women.

However, women's organisations and networks may not be equally active and effective throughout the world. While developed countries' women's movements are more organised both in resource and policy fronts, these organisations appear weaker in developing countries. For example, by forming 'Mothers' Clubs' the Latin American women in political office articulated political goals in the vocabulary of the family and the household, and eventually occupied the socially acceptable role of *supermadre*. Such a self-image made them collude in a process by which they were kept marginal to the development planning central to their governments and were denied influence (Black, 1989, p. 152-3; Haynes, 1996, p. 155; Waylen, 1996, p. 12). Donors' assistance based women's organisations rarely touch political issues because donors have special reservations in this area as Jahan (1995) demonstrated for Bangladesh and the Tanzanian's women's movement. Most of the women's movements in developing countries are at their empowerment stage and working to mobilise women to earn subsistence. Among other areas, health, education and credit programmes are significant. Religious fundamentalism is a constant threat to women's organisation in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh (Hensman, 1996). Due to fragmentation and lack of any united voice, these women's organisations rarely can support women candidates. Unlike the Western world, training in political decision making is a distant goal for the women's organisations in developing countries.

Both quotas and women's networks have been the key to success for Nordic countries as Wängnerud (2000) identified. This finding of the importance of sources of group power is along the same line as the propositions of Parsons (1969) and Kirkpatrick (1974). They emphasised the collectivity as the source of effectiveness in legislatures. We may find examples that with very few exceptions, women legislators who are successful in exercising individual power as cabinet ministers and in select committee positions, have had background in networks. Does it mean that group power is a necessary basis of individual power for women legislators' effectiveness? We intend to test this sub hypothesis:

Group power is an important basis of an individual power.

As proposed in chapter one, there is the major question of how New Zealand women achieved their relatively better legislative participation and performance. As with the Nordic countries, did women adopt any special strategy that helped them to succeed? This search has been carried out in chapters four, five and six.

2.2.3 Sources of institutional power

Power can also originate from formal structured institutions. Those sources too are responsible for increasing women's numbers in legislatures and their resulting influence. They are mostly connected with structural and/or institutional contexts. The concept of political powerlessness is one that refers specifically to public life in relation to institutionalised power. Traditionally, men control most institutionalised power and women enter into this male ordered framework. Among the politically recognised institutions, political parties (with their partisan characteristics) and caucuses, and electoral systems are significantly highlighted by critics in order to bring about substantial changes (Goetz, 2001; Phillips, 1995, 2001). The following is an account of how these institutions are used as sources of power and also how they can create barriers for women's legislative participation.

2.2.3.1 Political parties and caucuses

Political parties are the major organising principle of modern politics. They maintain vital links between the state, civil society, institutions of government and various groups within the society. The enormous influence of political parties in modern democracies and legislatures can be highlighted from the following proposition of Hague et al, (1998, p. 131):

Political parties are permanent organizations which contest elections, usually because they seek to occupy the decisive positions of authority within the state. Unlike interest groups, which seek merely to influence the government, serious parties aim to secure the levers of power. In Weber's phrase, parties live 'in a house of power'.

The power of political parties lies in elite recruitment, interest aggregation, point of reference and direction to government. Parties are responsible for providing states with their political leaders. In short, parties provide leadership to government. Representation is often seen as the primary function of parties. However, the impact of political parties is substantially different and complex depending on the particular political system. Therefore, Heywood (1997, p. 233) put forward a caution against

generalising the function and impact of political parties. For example, in a presidential system party leaders are usually the presidential contestants and appointment of non-party ministers is quite common. But in a parliamentary system the leader of the largest party normally becomes the prime minister. In this system, elected senior party members are usually appointed as ministers. In a power seeking process parties formulate government programmes through conferences, election manifestos and conventions to achieve popular support. This kind of function particularly applies to the parliamentary system where parties implement their policies as committed during the election campaign. Due to this strict party discipline, the mandate doctrine of representation promotes the ideology that representation can take place through the party mechanism, not assemblies. Sometimes the members of a specific party represent their party more than a specific social group or even the country as a whole. This particularly applies to the British influenced systems. For example, New Zealand Labour Party members must sign an agreement to abide by the decision of the party caucus (Catt, 1997a). In some parliaments, members lose their seats if they vote against the party, as in India and Bangladesh. On the other hand, in a presidential system, particularly in the US where the party system is relatively weaker, a candidate's personality and image outweigh party policies and issues.

As we are dealing with three parliamentary democracies, the following proposition of Palmer (1992, p. 130) explains more appropriately the roles of a political party in a parliamentary system:

In constitutional terms the main function of a political party is to capture and control the behaviour of the Parliament. In that sense a political party is certainly subversive of the institution of Parliament. The creation of one institution was for the purpose of capturing another. The aim of a political party is to dominate the policy outcomes of the Parliament and ensure that its programme is implemented.

To learn the above rules of the game one needs to be socialised into a political party organisation. One can develop organising capacity, decision-making techniques, lobbying and other political skills while working in the party. Political parties offer power both through access to public office and in the party organisation itself; they also provide useful links between public officials and voters. They exercise extensive influence in nominating candidates for parliamentary elections. An MP is primarily in the parliament because of the party rather than because of her or his personal

characteristics. Without a party identity an MP can rarely influence any policy outcomes.

We have pointed out that representing political parties is a legislator's prime task. Therefore, maintaining the party line is the expected behaviour from the members. Sometimes party discipline is so strict that the MPs who are elected as candidates of a particular party cannot vote against their own party in the parliament, nor can they abstain from voting in defiance of party directives. Those who fail to comply with party decisions risk losing membership of the parliament. This is particularly true for political parties in Bangladesh. Therefore, Ahmed (1998, p. 61) commented, "....law makers in Bangladesh are no better than party 'delegates'."

In the Norwegian case Matthews and Valen (1999, p. 154) asserted that no one but the 'good party person' is elected to the Storting and the parties retain considerable control over their members' committee behaviour. Party membership in the Storting has more influence in making decisions than any other group affiliation. Overall, parties are major sources of members' influence in parliaments. Party affiliation therefore, is extremely important to women to overcome typical societal discrimination against them. The first ever woman President of the New Zealand Labour Party, Margaret Wilson (1992, p. 40) asserted that if women are less influential in decision making at the party organisation level, the number of women in parliament will decline because prejudice remains strong against them. On the other hand, Jones and Navia (1999) stated that the experience of a Chilean grassroots women's group and their unfamiliarity with the array of political institutions made them vulnerable and disorganised. Not being part of a political party, they had no back up and their language was often outside the accepted political concepts. Those few women associated with party politics in developing countries tend to mobilise mainly in women's sections where decision-making mechanisms are rarely exercised. Overall, due to poor party structures and odd after hour timing of meetings, women in Third World countries rarely show interest in participating in the mainstream political parties. It is hardly surprising that information regarding party membership in Third World countries is scarce (Randall, 1987, p. 109; Waylen, 1996, p. 12).

Political parties are not only sources of power and influence but are regarded as gatekeepers because they have the power to nominate candidates (Norris, 1997, p. 218).

The central party organisations frequently have considerable influence over the nomination of candidates, and if they are committed to include more women, they have that option. But do political parties have a prejudice against nominating women as electoral candidates? Hague et al., (1998, p. 82) described how women are treated by political parties:

...of course, women still face the high hurdle of discrimination from sexist male politicians. These gatekeepers claim that women are 'unsuited' to politics – and then use the scarcity of women in high office to prove their point!

By suggesting corrective measures, researchers have raised considerable doubts about the liberal attitudes of political parties in nominating women (Phillips, 1995, 2001; Goetz, 2001). This leads to the development of a sub hypothesis that:

Political parties have a prejudice against nominating women as electoral candidates.

However, Norris and Lovenduski (1995) evaluated the scarcity of women in politics from a different angle. They found two interacting factors 'supply' and 'demand' as causal to women's underrepresentation. The most common explanation for the supply side factor is women do not come forward and/or they are not interested in politics. The demand side factor is related mainly to the selectors in political parties, who may discriminate against women's nomination. The authors tried to correlate the two factors suggesting that prospective candidates may be discouraged from putting forward their names because they anticipate failure. There may be some truth in both sides. Therefore, rather than accusing political parties of discriminating against women candidates, some women leaders are concerned about the supply side problem. At the end of the 20th century, Laura Liswood, the Co-Founder of the Council of Women World Leaders, in her keynote speech at the APEC Women Leaders' Network meeting, warned women that "Unlike Cinderella, we can't sit back and wait to be rescued" (1999, p. 2).

Women's share of legislative seats may also be affected by the partisan composition of the legislature. Leftist parties can be expected to express greater commitment to equality and hence a desire to reduce gender inequality, and so ought to be more likely to nominate women as candidates. Matland and Studlar (1996, p. 729) postulated that left parties usually feel a responsibility to bring the powerless group into the power

circle. Left parties also often have strong women's groups in the party structures that promote them to bring more women into the mainstream of the political arena. Thus, the larger the proportion of parliamentary seats held by leftist parties, the larger we would expect women's share of those seats to be. In earlier studies of gender inequality in political representation, Maurice Duverger (1955) argued that party differences were the most important cause of variation among France, West Germany, Italy, and Norway. On the other hand, partisan differences may have become less important in recent years, as nonleftist parties have moved to nominate more women in order to compete more effectively with parties of the left (Norris, 1993; Rule, 1994b; Matland and Studlar, 1996).

Competition between parties is one of the causes of increasing women's numbers in the parliament. This contagion process suggests that traditional parties feel pressured to nominate more women if one of their political rivals start to promote the representation of women and by such competition many countries have increased the proportion of women in their parliaments (Matland and Studlar, 1996).

However, this study not only intends to identify the barriers to participation but also barriers to women legislators' effectiveness. More women in the parliament does not mean they will all work for women's causes. As suspected by Phillips (1995) there is no guarantee that women will represent women. Not all women are interested in being representatives of women but some are. But do women have their own choice to work for women? Sawyer (2001b, p. 175) has given the specific example of the Australian Labour Party that adopted a target of 35% of all its parliamentary parties would be constituted by women by the year 2002. But this quota adoption did not end the resistance women faced within the party. Only those women who showed loyalty to male-controlled factions benefited. A more significant example of women's dissatisfaction with the Labour Party was exhibited in 1995 when a number of prominent Labour women left the party from the Queensland Branch and formed the Australian Women's Party. This new party has its goal to achieve equal parliamentary representation of women. Their accusation against the Labour Party:

'In the past 100 years we've been working inside the mainstream political parties together with men. Where has it got us? Not very close to equality' (quoted in Sawyer, 2001b, p. 176)

This example of the Australian Labour Party shows that even the leftist parties, those that generally have more concern for women's issues, may not be that liberal to women members' initiative towards women's causes. With strict party discipline it is much easier for women to be party representatives than women's representatives. Moreover, variation occurs not only between left and right but even between left parties. For instance, the New Zealand Labour Party is highly successful in addressing women's issues without any forms of quotas.

The main reason for this long discussion on political parties is, we have formulated a number of hypotheses and major research questions on the role of political parties in legislative representation. It is also intended to examine whether the strategy approach of Nordic political parties suggested by Wängnerud (2000) has any impact on New Zealand women's legislative representation. These issues are addressed in chapters five, six and seven.

2.2.3.2 Electoral systems

There is strong support demonstrating the effect of the electoral system structure on increasing the number of women in legislatures. Party list/multimember district systems are more conducive than are candidate-centered/single-member district systems. Research by Rule (1987, 1994a, 1994b); Norris (1987, 1997); Lovenduski and Norris (1993); Darcy et al., (1994); Matland (1998a) identify the nature of the electoral system as one of the most important factors in accounting for variations in the share of female legislators across nations. Several case studies (Rule, 1994b; Zimmerman, 1994; Matland and Taylor, 1997) and one cross-country analysis (Paxton, 1997) found that it makes a difference in both the wealthiest democratic nations and the less developed countries. Among the most affluent longstanding democracies, the U.S. has one of the smallest proportions of female legislators. The reason has been well explained by Rule (1994b, p. 22): none of the positive steps for women such as quotas in political parties, reserved seats in the Congress and 'woman-friendly' electoral systems are available in the US. It is worth noting that the US follows the First-Past-the-Post (FPP) plurality electoral system, which is 'woman-unfriendly' to Rule, whereas, she named the proportional representation system as 'woman-friendly'. A study by Kenworthy and Malami (1999) of the twenty most affluent longstanding democracies suggested that on average for these countries, a party list/multimember

district system increases women's share of parliamentary seats by nearly 12% compared to a candidate-centered/single-member district system.

Norris and Lovenduski (1995) argued that electoral systems with a substantial number of seats in multi-member constituencies facilitate the entry of women. But it would be misleading to see this factor in isolation from its broader context. A party list system is perhaps a facilitator, but certainly not a sufficient condition for high levels of female representation. In Scandinavia, the electoral system is conducive to women's representation but since it has remained stable, by itself this factor cannot account for change over time. In Israel, Italy and Greece the electoral system should be favourable to women, yet without party initiatives or wider political pressures from a women's movement, few are selected or elected. It is therefore, necessary to understand the interaction of the political system in a comprehensive model, rather than relying upon simple and deterministic explanations.

One of our queries regarding the impact of a system approach for New Zealand is that it switched over to MMP from the FPP electoral system, which is discussed in chapters five and six.

2.2.4 Sources of structural power

Every society has its own structure and method of control. The structure of a nation is a determinant of an individual citizen's power. In an authoritarian state citizens can exert and exercise the least amount of power. Lack of democratic practice is also recognised as a hurdle for women's political advancement as democratic countries have more liberal attitudes towards exercising people's power. Matland and Taylor (1997) argued that despite the patrimonial society, the significant achievement of Costa Rican women in politics and parliament is due to the country's long established democracy, PR electoral system, organised feminist movements and women's active involvement in political parties. Today, Costa Rican women reached 35.1% representation; that outweighs the USA with only 14% (IPU, 2002a). Not only that, over time, Costa Rican women have held a significant number of high government positions. Costa Rica has a higher Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) than France. The GEM reflects the percentage of women who hold parliamentary seats, the percentage who are managers and professionals and, lastly, their per capita income.

The developed countries have more favourable factors for individuals to exercise power. Norris and Inglehart (2000) found a striking correlation between levels of socio-economic development and support for egalitarian gender roles in politics. That helps make Norway exemplary in women's parliamentary representation. Also, state-funded electoral campaigns is a contribution of Norway's rich economy. However, other rich countries such as USA, Japan, South Korea and Singapore show lower support for women in politics. In contrast, some developing Latin American and African countries show moderate growth of women in politics. The authors proposed that improving one single variable such as the economy alone may not bring any change. Culture remains a strong barrier in rich Islamic states such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.

Some researchers have tried to correlate the familial power path with development. Genovese (cited in Drage, 1997, p. 46) found that women of less developed nations are more dependent on familial sources of power than women in developed nations. There may be some truth in it because as development increases, more women start to acquire the resources needed to become politically relevant, resources such as education, salaried labour force experience, and training in the professions. Once they are capable individually, it becomes easier for them to seek political position without any family connection.

None of our selected three countries are under authoritarian or communist regimes but are known as democratic nations. Again socio-economic factors have to be taken into consideration as Bangladesh falls into the category of developing country and Norway and New Zealand into the developed category.

2.2.4.1 Democracy

"Democracy entails a state in which there is some form of political equality among the people" (Held, 1987, p. 2). Held argued that democracy is expected to achieve some fundamental values and goods. They are equality, liberty, moral self-development, the common interest, private interests, social utility, the satisfaction of wants, efficient decisions and so on. Theoretically, these diverse values should contribute to women's political participation and accordingly, Moore and Shackman (1996) found a positive correlation that democratic nations have more women in their legislatures than nondemocratic nations. However, although democratic processes decrease artificial and

arbitrary barriers, Paxton (1997) found a negative correlation between democracy and women's legislative participation in her 108 nations cross-national study. A long-standing Indian democracy has proven to be very inhospitable to women resulting in a decline in the participation of women, not only in legislatures, but in many other political and public arenas. The particular problem for women in India is more serious due to increasing violence, sexual harassment and victimisation at the ground level in many of the political parties. Parties do not function according to democratic norms, and women parliamentarians are kept sidelined in their respective parties. Lack of financial transparency and the dominance of 'thugs' and 'crooks' in political parties made the parties less credible to people (Kishwar, 1996b, p. 28). Earlier, in a survey in India, Kaushik, (1993, p. 81) found that 63% of middle class women did not approve their family member's participation in politics, as politics is largely 'dirty', 'corrupt' and 'immoral' to them. Overall, the political culture made women's participation far more hazardous than the earlier history prior to 1947. Dahl believed that democracy "is the national ideology of India" (1998, p. 162) rather than actual practice:

India's political practices have displayed some egregious shortcomings from a democratic point of view. It has suffered from recurring violations of basic rights. India is viewed by businesspeople as among the ten most corrupt countries in the world. Worse, in 1975 India's democratic institutions were overturned and replaced by dictatorship when the prime minister, Indira Gandhi, staged a coup d'état, declared a state of emergency, suspended civil rights and imprisoned thousands of leading opponents (Dahl, 1998, pp. 160-1).

Bangladesh resembles India in many respects. Bangladesh's democracy has experienced military government on a number of occasions. The subsequent elected governments have failed to withdraw completely from dependency on military administration. This kind of democracy cannot be a determinant of, or provide sufficient support for women's power and influence. Paxton's view that democracy decreases artificial and arbitrary barriers means it can enhance women's mobility, can create easy access for women to different institutions that are considered as facilitators rather than determinants of power and effectiveness. Our sub hypothesis is therefore:

Democracy plays a facilitating role in women's effective representation.

2.2.4.2 Socio-economic condition of the nation

There is reason to suspect that gender political inequality will be affected by a nation's level of economic development. Richard Matland (1998b, p. 114) noted:

As countries become more developed, women are increasingly integrated into all spheres of public life; this should include representation in the national legislature ...Several processes that accompany development should increase women's political resources and decrease barriers to political activity. Development leads to weakening of traditional values, decreased fertility rates, increased urbanization, greater educational and labour force participation for women, and attitudinal changes in perceptions of the appropriate roles for women.

These multifarious but interconnected factors seem crucial in women's overall underrepresentation in Third World countries. However, even overcoming all of the above barriers women may not appear to be significantly available in the political realm in developed countries; for instance, Singapore. Again, we have seen a highly developed as well as democratic country like the US has one of the smallest proportions of female legislators. On the other hand, Costa Rica, a less developed country has a high representation of women in its parliament, which is an exception among the developing countries (Matland and Taylor, 1997). Regarding exceptions like these, Dahl stated:

That competitive politics is undoubtedly associated in some way with socio-economic development is not, it seems, a very satisfactory - nor perhaps even a very interesting - conclusion. What is more tantalizing is the fact that the association is weak, that the conclusion ignores a number of critical deviant cases, and that the relationship of one to the other is unexplained (Dahl, 1971, p. 70).

One of the unexplained factors, could be 'culture'. The more dominant factor 'culture' is distinct from the developmental factor. Matland (1998b, p. 114) asserted, "the development factor looks at the absolute level of development, while the cultural factor looks at the women's position relative to men's." Thus culture remains causal globally as we find from the study of Kenworthy and Malami (1999) covering 146 nations. Levels of economic development did not appear to have a direct effect and they found culture was more important than the level of development.

However, development still remains crucial. When women reach men at the same level of social status with literacy, university degrees and work force participation, they will be regarded as more equal to men in the political sphere. Again, the wealthier the country, the more leisure time women have as technological supports are available for their household chores. Formal childcare facilities are part of the culture of developed countries. Paxton (1997, p. 448) put it:

Economic development has proved to be quite important for gender inequality of other types. Development can indicate some freedom from the daily task of living for the individuals of a country, which would be expected to positively increase the number of women available for political office.

But not all women face this barrier of limited leisure time, some can afford it at the cost of money, and equality is not an issue for them. In Asia, it is generally the rich women who participate in politics. They can afford childcare with extended families and hire maids. Overall, for Third World women's political participation Waylen's (1996, p. 12) assertion is noteworthy:

Almost universally middle-class women, because of factors such as economic resources and employment, levels of education and confidence, find it easier to participate than poorer women in the upper echelons of conventional politics.

It thus appears that women's individual situation bears limited relation to the prevailing socio-economic conditions of the country. However, this not only applies to Third World women. But in general, middle class men overwhelm political participation (Blondel, 1980; Thiébault, 1991). The power exercised by women legislators in the three different countries may not be the same as Bangladesh is far behind Norway and New Zealand in terms of development. We will therefore, make special efforts to find out how the socio-economic conditions of a society affect the power structure. A sub hypothesis which can be tested against our three proposed countries is:

The socio-economic condition of a state is a crucial component for power and effectiveness.

2.3 Summary and conclusion

Following the propositions of chapter one, this chapter has examined broadly two kinds of barriers to participation in politics that women usually face. These barriers strongly affect women's political power that leads to effectiveness. Among the general barriers, women's reproductive role, private and public roles, socialisation process, stereotypical feminine behaviour and cultural and religious norms are significant. It has already been seen that the barriers that hinder participation can simultaneously be barriers to effectiveness and sometimes it is hard to demarcate them.

Sapiro's model helped us to understand that women's specific interests have their origins in women's domestic roles. Therefore, they may find it difficult to exert formal

political power, and behave stereotypically instead. Legislators' stereotypical issue preference is one of the major areas of their effective legislative representation which it is intended to assess against their placement in different select committees.

Women face access difficulty in recognised sources of political power which affect both their participation and effectiveness as legislative representatives. But critics have made specific suggestions to surmount those barriers by adopting special measures, strategies and techniques. As we have seen four important types of power: individual, group, institutional, and structural are relevant for this research which is demonstrated through a flow chart. Often these sources of power are interrelated but demarcation has been introduced for academic discussion. Cabinet and select committee positions belong to resource while position powers lie under the broad category of individual power. These two positions are key determinants of women legislators' effectiveness for this study. Similarly, speaking ability and overall reputation can be assessed from all sources of power that women exercise to make an impact. Group power is essential to bring more women into parliaments and quotas and women's networks have been found useful. These special strategies are two key areas for focus as they contributed highly to the Nordic women's legislative representation. Institutional power provides the way for the individual legislator to enter into the formal power structure through political parties and electoral systems. Women mostly face problems with these two sources of power and critics put forward the prescriptions of liberal attitudes of political parties and woman-friendly electoral systems. Both system and strategy approaches are intended to examine these two sources of power. Structural sources of power, which are also relevant, can affect all other sources. For example, the type of government and socio-economic condition of a particular nation determines how freely women can move. All these sources have been used to determine the perceived effectiveness of women legislators against four selected indicators: holding of cabinet positions; select committee assignments; speaking ability and overall reputation. However, to fill the current gap in this brief comparative study constituting three countries, a number of hypotheses have been put forward to test in the following chapters. All the sources of power will be highlighted when we study women's influence in contemporary legislatures in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

WOMEN LEGISLATORS' POWER AND EFFECTIVENESS IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

While examining the hypothesis that '*specific barriers hinder women's legislative participation and effectiveness*' in chapter two, we discovered that generally women legislators are subject to constraints and viewed as different because:

- Reproductive roles make women less effective
- They are different from men in exercising power
- They are less aggressive
- They serve in the softer portfolios
- They show specific issue preferences

Our intention is therefore, firstly, to analyse women legislators' effectiveness by addressing these five broad areas. 'Stepping-stones', which it was intended to assess along with cabinet positions, is discussed more fully. Secondly, to find out whether women work for women, the legislators are categorised into three divisions. This is based on women's issue and policy preferences. Through this categorisation, the hypothesis that '*representing women only may limit women's ability to fulfil their other representative roles*' is partly addressed. Finally, it examines how women legislators used the different sources of power to become effective.

3.1 Visible differences between male and female MPs

3.1.1 Reproductive roles make women less effective

A firm stereotypical belief is that women's biological roles limit them from participating in politics. If it were true then none of the mothers would be successful in politics. Again, if the scarcity of women in positions of power is seen as biologically caused, then it might be concluded that nothing can be done about it. In fact, a majority of powerful women leaders have been mothers, for instance, Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher, Golda Meir and so on. However, we recognise that sexual functions such as reproduction make a difference between men and women's participation in politics, that childrearing is a major inhibitor to women's political participation and it is no accident that women who are active in trade union and party politics tend not to have dependent

children. Neale (2001, p. 152) assessed this from the reality of women's major responsibility for childcare which has a 'detrimental effect' on their career opportunities. Therefore, it was no coincidence that some of the first women MPs were free of restricting family ties having remained single. Examples of this kind are Jeannette Rankin in the US Congress, Agnes Macphail in the Canadian House of Commons and Dorothy Tangney in the Australian Federal Parliament (Haines, 1992, p. 74).

It seems in the past mothers were only considered for childrearing. Lane (1959) and many others mentioned lack of leisure time in explaining why lower-class women were not politically active. The obvious question may arise here what about the fathers? If the task is so easy why are they not involved in childrearing? Even liberal theorists like John Stuart Mill (1912) in his *The Subjection of Women* contended that women were naturally better suited for the responsibilities of housework and childcare unless their class position permitted them to hire other women for the same activities. Therefore, in those countries which have a deeply divided class structure, the rich, and higher-class women, are often involved in politics because they can afford to hire maids for their children. This is a familiar scenario in most Third World countries including Bangladesh where women politicians hire maids to look after children.

Another stereotypical belief is that the childrearing experiences make women biased towards nurturing types of issues in politics. But Jeannette Rankin, the first US Congresswoman who had no children or family ties, introduced a maternal and infant welfare bill in 1918 (Carlson, 1990, p. 17). In contrast, although both Indira Gandhi and Margaret Thatcher had family ties with children, they were considered as aggressive, assertive, shrewd, and ruthless; they acted like men and were unsympathetic to women's issues (Carras, 1995). These practical examples may imply that biology is not a good guide for the stereotypical behaviour of men and women.

Feminist writers have tended to interpret women's stereotypical issue preference in a positive connotation. They suggest women's closer relation to caring and nurturing enable them to retain and re-introduce to public life a commitment to the cultivation of peace and integrity in political affairs. Some theorists find women's anti-war and peace-making role is associated with motherhood, which leads them to be more caring. Yuval-Davis (1997, p. 112) quoted from Sara Ruddick who has claimed that some

characteristics inherent in the ideology and practice of mothering can become the foundation of an anti-militaristic movement. She called it “maternal nonviolence: a truth in the making.” But there are exceptions as women themselves are not a homogeneous group; they differ from each other. Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher and Golda Meir did not flinch from wars. While they were criticised for not doing anything to improve women’s situation in politics and elsewhere, most of their publicity came from their attitude to wars.

3.1.2 They are different from men in exercising power

Many argued that women have a tendency to exercise a non-hierarchical participatory notion of power expressed as ‘power to’, and the use of power by women to advance policy goals rather than for enhancing their political reputation is evident (Bystydzienski, 1992a). Thus they scored lower than men on average in the desire to ‘exercise power’ and “the opportunity to enhance one’s status seems less power driven for women” (Rosenthal, 1998, p. 60). One of the most outspoken women MPs in New Zealand expressed their difference from men:

...our behaviour is still demonstrably different from the men who hold similar office. Politics for the male leaders is more likely to be a vehicle for personal and career advancement. For women it is likely to be a labour of love. Women are not in politics to capture positions for themselves, but for others (Marilyn Waring, 1985, p. 34).

Their ambition is to move forward in an agenda they care about and are satisfied with and they run for public office to ‘get things done’. One way or the other if women are able to perform their legislative tasks why are they faulted for being ineffective? As Zellman (1976, p. 38) put it “a woman may handle a particular job in a different way than a man would, and since a man will probably be judging her performance, he may judge her to be ineffective when she was merely different.”

Another difference of women from men appeared from their speaking ability. Political leaders have various options to talk publicly. Excellent public speaking usually brings rewards to the politicians. Kathlene (1994) demonstrated that while chairing a committee is an important position of power, different speaking behaviours emerged in committee work as women chairing committees speak less and take fewer turns, and more women in a committee means more silence. Does it imply that a talkative woman is more powerful? We would not consider it as an indicator of power because Kirkpatrick (1974, p. 120) made it clear that:

Though the public often perceives talking as the chief business of the legislature, members know otherwise. Learning not to talk - in committee and, especially, on the floor - is one of the chief lessons awaiting the freshman legislator. She who speaks only when she has specific knowledge of a subject under discussion will be listened to and respected. Not so her more garrulous colleague.

It reminds us that the knowledgeable members are most powerful in legislatures and people usually accept the influence of an expert. However, earlier we recognised that both authority and accountability are integral components of representation and women's less authoritative image is still a concern to modern women leaders and managers. Laura Liswood, (1999, p. 1), the Co-Founder of the Council of Women World Leaders, asserted that women need to develop more authoritative skills and should opine directly and loudly.

Indicating further differences between men and women legislators, it is mostly US researchers including Kirkpatrick who have found women legislators as less ambitious. However, it is also true for the US in particular that Madeleine Korbelt Albright's rise as the Secretary of State, Janet Reno's as Attorney General, the researcher Jeane J. Kirkpatrick's as a successful Congresswoman, US representative to the UN and a Member of the Cabinet and National Security Council during the Reagan administration, Condoleezza Rice, National Security Adviser in the latest Bush administration would not have been possible without their ambition. Elsewhere in the world Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the President of the Philippines, Lu Xiulian, the Vice President of Taiwan, two of the consecutive Japanese Foreign Ministers Makiko Tanaka and Yoriko Kawaguchi would not have been promoted without their ambition. Therefore, following Lake (1997), an inference can be made here that there is no rule of thumb that all women legislators possess the same view regarding ambition.

3.1.3 They are less aggressive

"Human aggression is behaviour performed by one person (the aggressor) with the intent of harming another person (the victim) who is believed by the aggressor to be motivated to avoid that harm" (Kazdin, 2000, p. 163). Harm may be of different kinds, such as, physical, psychological (verbal insult) and indirect (destroying victim's property). In one way or another, theorists have found a positive correlation between aggressiveness and war (Durbin and Bowlby, 1939; Glover, 1947; Kazdin, 2000). Majorities of people prefer to keep the peace, and aggression that works for possession

and power is caused by aggressive minorities in order to break the peace. The outcome of aggression is:

Adult aggression, as we have seen, is normally carried out in group activity. Political parties make civil war. Churches make religious war. States make international war. These various kinds of groups can attract absolute loyalty and canalise torrents of hatred and murder - through the mechanism of displacement (Durbin and Bowlby, 1939, p. 21).

Aggression is used in politics as Kazdin (2000, p. 164) observed that many electoral candidates expect their chances of winning an election to be enhanced by harming their competitors. But how do women act towards aggression?

John Stuart Mill (1912, pp. 531-2) referring to European women stated that:

The influence of women counts for a great deal in two of the most marked features of modern European life - its aversion to war, and its addiction to philanthropy. Excellent characteristics both; but unhappily, if the influence of women is valuable in the encouragement it gives to these feelings in general, in the particular applications the direction it gives to them is at least as often mischievous as useful. In the philanthropic department more particularly, the two provinces chiefly cultivated by women are religious proselytism and charity.

The truth of Mill's assertion becomes clear when we look at the performance of Scandinavian women legislators. This evidential support has come from the study of Abzug and Kelber that the strong presence of women in the Norwegian parliament "has made it a leading champion of human rights as well as women's rights, a force for peace, environmental protection and sound development assistance programs sensitive to women's needs in poverty-stricken nations. In Sweden women working inside and outside of government stopped their country from entering the nuclear arms race and went on to block the continued use of nuclear power" (1994, p. xv).

The stereotypical belief that aggressiveness is an essential quality for politicians is however, under attack. Aggressiveness is not necessarily a suitable quality for a successful politician irrespective of gender. Often women are faulted for not being aggressive from a false conception that the general public frequently uses aggressiveness and assertiveness interchangeably. However, Kazdin (2000, p. 163) argued that 'aggressiveness' is not synonymous with 'assertiveness'. In fact, aggressiveness and exhibitionism are unacceptable in both women and men to many including Kirkpatrick (1974, p. 120). Modesty, which is believed to be especially important for women is often confused with submissiveness or acquiescence or

weakness. She prescribed a role model of a political woman, which is significant for this research. She defined:

Political women as members of the female sex who desire significant influence in the process of determining public policy, acquire the skills necessary to achieve influence, wield the influence in institutions where decisions are made, and seek to preserve influence through continued participation in power processes (Kirkpatrick, 1974, p. 219).

However, women are not a homogeneous group. Mill made a small mistake by depicting all women equally. Raaum's (1995, p. 41) assertion that "there is no empirical evidence to suggest that women have less influence than men in comparable positions" was supported by Carras (1995, pp. 53-4):

Where the national interest is seriously threatened by another state, any leader - man or woman - is inclined to seek a military solution to the crisis. Many analysts, eager to point out that women are no different than men in their disposition to war, will invariably mention Indira Gandhi in 1971, Golda Meir in 1967, and Margaret Thatcher in 1982.

Regarding the commonly used connotation that women are stereotyped as not aggressive and not suitable for politics due to their emotional natures seems to weigh less merit.

3.1.4 They serve in the softer portfolios

One 1999 study of Andrew Reynolds consisting of 180 nations showed that out of 3486 cabinet ministers, 302 were women. Not only is this poor percentage (8.7%) remarkable but also there is a tendency to weigh the cabinet positions into 'harder' and 'softer' categories. Like Kirkpatrick, a similar classification was put forward by Carras (1995, p. 45) and Reynolds (1999, p. 564) for political issues. Carras named national security, war and peace as 'high politics' and human rights and development as 'low politics'. Similarly, Reynolds named economic planning, national security, foreign affairs and home affairs as harder and more prestigious portfolios because of their value as 'stepping-stones' to national leadership. Whereas, health, women's affairs, education, culture/arts and social welfare lie in the 'softer' sociocultural categories. He also found that there is a sharp demarcation of portfolio allocation between men and women ministers and a world-wide tendency to put women into the softer sociocultural cabinet positions. He showed a gender-based portfolio allocation among 302 women cabinet ministers (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1. Gender based portfolio allocation

Portfolios	Number of women	Percentage of women	Percentage of women (amended by the author)
Foreign Affairs	12	3	4
Finance-Treasury	3	1	1
Defence	2	1	1
Home Affairs	2	1	1
Health-Social Welfare	48	14	16
Women's Affairs	47	13	16
Education	32	9	11
Culture-Arts-Heritage	32	9	11

Source: Reynolds, 1999, pp. 562-3.

Reynolds's 'stepping-stones' phrase merits attention. He understood that national security and foreign affairs are stepping-stones to become the next head of government. In other words, his claim is that, as long as women usually hold 'softer' ministerial positions they are less likely to reach the top. His categorisation of only certain ministries as 'prestigious' also deserves attention. Does it mean that all other portfolios are less 'prestigious'? What is the basis of his claim? And how far is it true? In fact, very few women heads of government were responsible for Reynolds's 'harder' or more 'prestigious' portfolios before they became the chief executives. Table 3.2 provides a few examples of contemporary women leaders' portfolio allocation prior to assuming their chief executive position.

It is noteworthy that the women chief executives in Table 3.2 represent both developing and developed countries. A majority of this sample of women chief executives were first time elected members of parliaments and did not hold any portfolio at all. Some might argue that a considerable number of them came to power through widow's walk and other family channels. But what about Norway, The Philippines and Indonesia? Gro Harlem Brundtland, the former Prime Minister of Norway served as an environment minister before becoming the chief executive. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is the daughter of a former president but her political rise was prominently through the path of insiders/climbers. She served as a social welfare minister and vice president. Megawati Sukarnoputri has also used her political father's image but she was a duly elected vice president too. Harder portfolio theory did not work for them as stepping-stones.

Table 3.2. Portfolios held by women before their chief executive position

Name	Country	Tenure	Portfolios served before their chief executive position
Sirimavo Bandaranaike	Sri Lanka	1960-65 1970-77	None
Golda Meir	Israel	1969-74	Labour, Foreign Affairs
Indira Gandhi	India	1966-77 1980-84	Information
Margaret Thatcher	Britain	1979-90	Secretary of State for Education and Science
Gro Harlem Brundtland	Norway	1981 1986-89 1990-96	Environment
Corazon Aquino	The Philippines	1986-92	None
Benazir Bhutto	Pakistan	1988-91 1993-96	None
Violeta Chamorro	Nicaragua	1990-97	None
Edith Cresson	France	1991-92	Agriculture; Trade and Tourism; Industrial Redeployment and Foreign Trade; European Affairs
Khaleda Zia	Bangladesh	1991-96 2001-	None
Sheikh Hasina	Bangladesh	1996-01	None
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo	The Philippines	2001-	Social Welfare; Vice President
Megawati Sukarnoputri	Indonesia	2001-	Vice President

Source: Carras, 1995; D'Amico and Beckman, 1995; Harris, 1995; Crystal, 1998; Mcbeth and Djalal, 2001; Sheehan, 2001; Who's Who 2001.

For not only women but also male heads of government, the 'stepping-stones' theory of Reynolds does not apply. Some of the famous world leaders for instance, Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Bob Hawke of Australia, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela of South Africa, Anthony Blair of the UK held no previous portfolio. It seems that Reynolds missed some of the crucial factors that need to count for future leadership. Party leadership and democratic revolution are significant among them. It is seen that use of these two paths often makes people popular and effective leaders. There is one more reason for rejecting Reynolds's 'stepping-stones' theory: he assumed a parliamentary governmental system world-wide. There are a large number of presidential governmental systems, and cabinet members rarely become presidents in those countries, for instance the US. Thus whilst, experience as cabinet ministers in Reynolds's so-called 'stepping-stones' positions is an advantage, it does not appear as a necessary criterion for leadership.

Another weakness appears with Reynolds's statement when he stated "the most popular portfolio to be handled by a woman world-wide is Health" (1999, p. 565). But does not

the health portfolio represent power and influence? It is worth noting that in any welfare state, education, social welfare and health are large and very important portfolios. Many researchers, including Kirkpatrick, probably followed the US standard policy preference world-wide, where defence gets the top priority:

The arena of foreign affairs - diplomacy and defense - has been at its very top levels, in all countries, a very peculiarly, particularly male bastion. And it matters. This is where the very biggest decisions are made, the decisions that shape the destiny of the world (Kirkpatrick, 1995, p. 105).

But does defence make the biggest decisions? Hague et al., (1998, p. 111) delivered a reasonable explanation about the power of defence in the US.

The United States is the world's remaining superpower. This status is based partly on its 'hard power': a large population, a massive economy and the capacity to deliver military force anywhere. Yet America's 'soft power' is also significant. The USA benefits from a leading position in education, science, information technology, communications, entertainment and professional services. Its culture, brand names and language have universal appeal.

As the country's status is based on its 'hard' portfolios, almost everyone knows who Colin Powell is and therefore, probably no one knows who is the health minister of the US. However, health is a private sector concern in the US, therefore, unlike the welfare states, government has little control of it. Health, education and welfare have generally been a single portfolio in the US, and state governments take the majority of the decisions.

Priorities may also vary and depend on a particular nation's socio-economic status. For example, a country like New Zealand cares more about its trade whereas, Bangladesh, like many other developing countries, is kept busy implementing development projects. In this, Herman's (1976, p. 99) proposition deserves attention.

Indeed the role of legislatures appears to be related to the levels of political and socio-economic development in various countries. For example, in post-industrial liberal democracies legislative activities are primarily concerned with controlling various aspects of the executive branch of government. In developing countries legislatures perform nation-building and communication functions. In the people's democracies, perhaps the major functions of parliaments are legitimization and patronage.

However, Herman is still too simplistic and broad in his proposition. There are significant priority differences even between developing countries. In fact, the nature of the state, economy and society determine the legislative and positional priorities,

therefore, the power and prestige of any particular portfolio varies from state to state. For instance, in an agro-based developing country like Bangladesh, the agriculture ministry is important. However, agriculture would never be such an important portfolio for a developing country like Oman. Energy, petroleum and oil are far more important than agriculture in Oman. So it is with developed countries. Defence priority between two developed countries in different parts of the world like Germany and Australia, varies considerably. In 1998, the military expenditure of Germany was \$32.8 billion whereas, it was \$6.9 billion for Australia. The USA, a superpower, tops the expenditure charts spending \$276.7 billion in 1999 (CIA, 2000).

Legislative power can also be assessed in terms of resources allocated, that is the portfolio size. In welfare states the health and social welfare sectors involve the greatest amount of money and the largest workforce. The former woman Health Minister for Ontario, Frances Lankin, emphasised the significance of the health ministry by stating that it was very hard to run a ministry with a 17.4 billion dollar budget and huge issues of major public controversy and public interest (Byrne, 1997, p. 610). Similarly, the health, education and social welfare sectors of New Zealand and Norway get more media coverage in terms of their multifarious work and personnel management than defence. These ministries do not seem to be softer socio-cultural portfolios. If women lead the largest ministries in terms of budget and workforce, it would not be fair to judge them as less influential.

Concentrating upon the 'soft' portfolios such as children and welfare for women while men have 'hard' ones for international power, seems only a partial story. Dozens of men have served as secretaries of welfare, but few women have been secretaries of defence or state. It is worth noting that overall, the average number of women in legislatures is only about 14.7%, and therefore the percentage would obviously be less in the so-called powerful portfolios.

3.1.5 They show specific issue preferences

While searching the literature on women's power it appears that a majority of theorists have the tendency to assess women's legislative power in relation to their issue preference. We have learned earlier that the tendency of male dominated parliaments is to allocate children and women's issues to women because men do not like those issues. Not only that women are good at certain things but they care about certain things more

than men. Referring to women's inclination to specific issues, Randall (1987, p. 93) asserted that defence, foreign policy and economic policy are obviously important to men and women. But she observed that conventional politics tends to neglect, 'administrative', 'social' or 'cultural', issues that are of most immediate concern to many women. Children's nursery school provision, education and standards of housing are of these kinds. Skjeie (1991a, p. 234) named the Norwegian women legislators' priorities towards specific issues as 'politics of care' where women are more interested in policies on welfare, environment, equality, education and disarmament.

Despite women's issue bias, there are claims that fewer women have been given important and prestigious tasks. Kirkpatrick (1974, p. 126) did not believe that male prejudice has prevented women from being where they want to be, rather she asserted that "women assigned to education, public health, child welfare, and other 'women's' subjects, are usually there because they have requested the assignment." She designated women legislators' committee bias towards education, public health, child welfare and other subjects, which tend to be associated with women's interests as related to their satisfaction. But she explained that "satisfaction does not equal power." Taking only stereotypical tasks may reflect women legislators' inexperience towards other issues. Constituency may have various other needs. Therefore, Kirkpatrick critically assessed women legislators' stereotypical issue preference in relation to effectiveness:

There are no "feminine" roles in a contemporary legislature, and stereotypical "feminine" behaviour is neither meaningful nor effective. Each woman works out for herself a formula for dealing with males as equal in these task-centred institutions and so long as her practices do not violate conventional sensibilities, her personal preferences will probably be honoured (Kirkpatrick, 1974, p. 114).

She is in favour of a certain amount of personal preferences but not in favour of violating conventional practices. Many sociologists have sought to assess stereotypical roles by depicting them in positive terms. Among them Ashmore and Longo (1995, p. 67-8) who noted that gender stereotypes indicate men and women are good in different ways. Men are stereotyped as good in intellectual activities and leadership roles, whereas women are stereotyped as good in social activities. Referring to a competency scale, Biernat (1995, p. 98) asserted that rather "than endorsing an overarching stereotype that men are more competent than women, we thought that subjects might subscribe to the beliefs that 'men are better than women at writing about masculine topics' and 'women are better than men at writing about feminine topics'."

There appears to be a possibility for examining women's issue preferences over time. It is interesting to note that the stereotypical behaviour of women changes as time passes. Referring to the US case, Rosenthal (1998, p. 36) pointed out how the advancement of decades prepared women to accommodate multifarious policy issues. She stated that:

Some women in the 1970s felt channelled into committee assignments based on stereotypical expectations about women's special aptitudes or interests in people problems and "care" issues ... By the 1980s, women were no longer confined to certain types of committees and any residual ghettoization of women into health and human services committees occurred as a result of self-selection rather than coercion or discrimination ... By the 1990s, Dolan and Ford found more women serving in all committee subject areas with no change in the committee assignments of men...

This is an indication that women legislators have widened their interests. It is no coincidence that the majority of the initial women legislators came into the legislature through the deaths of husbands or fathers (Richter, 1990-91; D'Amico, 1995; Fathers, 1999). Most of them had no prior public life experience. Possessing only domestic sphere experience and expertise these women had a tendency to address only domestic care issues. These stereotypical roles of women in legislatures was a matter of great concern as they were identified as less powerful and less influential political actors.

We have identified women's networks and movements as sources of women legislators' power, influence and effectiveness. Women's organisations felt the necessity of expanding women's experience and interests in other areas to improve their effectiveness in overall public spheres. Several women's organisations started to train women. According to Baker (1990) throughout the nineteenth century women participated in politics through organisations that worked to correct what they defined as injustices toward women and children. In 1869, a professional women's club formed in New York City was named Woman's Parliament. This Parliament was the fullest expression of the transfer of the woman's sphere to politics. By involving women in the male political arena, women's right to vote threatened to end political separation. Women's suffrage threatened the fraternal, ritualistic character of male politics, just as it promised to undercut female political culture. During the late nineteenth century, separate political cultures had nearly reached the end of their existence. While taking traditional domestic concerns seriously, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) taught women how to expand them into wider social concerns and political action. With greater success than any other women's group, it managed to forge the

woman's sphere into a broadly based political movement. Nelson (1990) added that the first twenty years of the twentieth century witnessed the increasing power of several mass movements promoting women's empowerment. These movements focused on empowerment both in the family and in public life. These efforts drew upon and supported such powerful women's institutions as the WCTU, the National American Woman Suffrage Association, women's colleges, and women's social and religious organisations of all kinds. As an outcome of women's training for public life they acquired diversified knowledge, experience and simultaneously expanded their areas of interests.

However, although earlier in this chapter we tried to overrule the ideas and concepts of Mill regarding women's philanthropic nature for their issue preference in the past, it has to be considered that women themselves may have a natural bias towards human well-being. Therefore, a majority of them may not overcome their biases even with the advancement of time, due to their inherent inclination. For instance, Congresswoman Lindy Boggs said she found a natural constituency among women and women's groups. She and other women members of the House and Senate, just naturally became the focus of 'questions, complaints and appeals' from individuals and groups confronting discrimination (Rajoppi, 1993, p. 92). It is also true that women cabinet ministers themselves feel a responsibility to represent women and women's issues in the cabinet and in the House. Byrne (1997) demonstrated the Canadian case of women cabinet ministers and their acknowledgement of an extremely important added responsibility towards women. Nonetheless, although women legislators may have biases towards certain policies, the degree of bias varies from person to person. It seems theorists have a tendency to overlook the fact that some women have a real bias in their belief that they are fully responsible for womenfolk; some feel responsible for broader policies but still have a bias towards women's issues; and some of them do not recognise women's issues at all. Therefore, we intend to take this opportunity to highlight a new arena of the degree of women's policy preferences. Based on their interests, women legislators are divided into three categories, such as i) single-issue legislators, ii) multiple issues legislators and iii) legislators who avoid women's issues.

3.1.5.1 Single-issue legislators

This section is intended to address single-issue legislators, those who concentrate on social welfare type issues only. Those who possess the feeling that they should work on

behalf of women are recognised as fitting into this category. These women legislators have beliefs and biases, which are accumulated through their different socialisation experiences, that lead them to behave stereotypically. In 1943, one of the first two women MPs in the Australian Federal Parliament was Dame Enid Lyons, a mother of twelve who also became known as ‘mother of the parliament’. She mentioned that women had different experiences from men and this could be reflected in their activities. She would use “the homely metaphors of the kitchen rather than those of the operating theatre, the workshop or the farm” (Haines, 1992, p. 89). It is noteworthy that the motherly image of Dame Enid Lyons overruled her leadership image. Her exclusive stereotypical issue preference cast her as less experienced and less knowledgeable in other areas. Following Kirkpatrick, this feminine image may not be desirable in the parliament as it indicates a lack of professional knowledge. It recalls the famous quote of Sapiro that “women’s language is the language of the noninfluential” (1983, p. 172). There is a caution in chapter one against this kind of representation that single issue preference may limit women’s further advancement and this also partly supports the hypothesis that *‘representing women only may limit women’s ability to fulfil their other representative roles’*. However, decades later than Dame Enid Lyons, Senator Susan Ryan and Janine Haines in Australia, Dr Marilyn Waring in New Zealand, Clare Short and Teresa Gorman in the UK, to name a few, raised issues of importance to women. They were not regarded as noninfluential because their areas of interests had widened and they were not confined to women’s issues only.

Although, for academic discussion, we have divided women legislators into three issue-based categories: i) single-issue legislators, ii) multiple issues legislators and iii) legislators who avoid women’s issues, often these groupings overlap. It is interesting to note that women fall under the stereotyped category not because all of them are devotedly attached to women’s issues. Rather it is that women legislators sometimes feel compelled to take up issues which are ignored by men. As Carlson (1990, p. 17) put it:

Since Congresswoman Jeannette Rankin introduced a maternal and infant welfare bill in 1918, women have often been instrumental in passing the kind of legislation overlooked by men. Women in Congress have been the sponsors of bills that set up the network of veterans’ hospitals, assisted middle-income families in financing homes, reformed pension laws and funded education for the disabled.

Women also formed formal and informal networks within parliaments to deal with welfare issues. In between the two world wars, irrespective of parties, Britain's women MPs were motivated to improve the situation of women and children. They were successful in introducing eight bills regarding women and children. Among others, the Conservative MPs, Duchess of Atholl, Thelma Cazelet-Keir, Irene Ward and Labour's Ellen Wilkinson put a special effort into making this happen. In 1970 the Labour MP for Blackburn, Barbara Castle, introduced the Equal Pay Bill (Haines, 1992). Since the formation of the CCWI in the USA in 1979, congresswomen began monitoring legislation affecting women and families, and 200 bills have been passed into law that have improved the status of women and their families in American society. Congress has passed legislation to toughen child support laws; to guarantee working families the right to take unpaid leave to bond with their newborn and for family emergencies; to enforce equal pay for equal work; to provide for safe, affordable childcare; to expand opportunities for women-owned businesses; to strengthen laws against rape, domestic violence, and other violence against women; and to improve the quality of women's reproductive health. In the 106th Congress, the Caucus introduced and supported a wide variety of bills designed to improve research and services for these women's issues. Women in Congress are increasing in number and influencing legislation on issues such as gun control and the budget with their votes (Dunham, 1994; CCWI, 2000). These are a few examples of the power and influence of women's groups and networks. Although these issues involve their stereotypical interests, their collective action helped them to exercise the power to be effective.

Many of the bills relating to women's and children's issues such as, equal employment opportunity policy, abortion rights, violence against women, and childcare subsidies might not be passed without women legislators' joint efforts. In many contemporary parliaments these bills faced resistance from majority male legislators. Specifically, Kelber (1994, p. 206) referred to a report that listed some two dozen bills first introduced by women legislators, such as the Fair Labor Standards Act 1938, the 1944 GI Bill of Rights, Fair Credit Protection Act and others of this kind. She added that women in Congress have been responsible for an array of groundbreaking legislation that addressed issues that had been overlooked, neglected or ignored. These women, whether Democrats or Republicans, shared a concern for human welfare and a determination to have government serve the needs of the people.

Due to stereotypical beliefs and biases there is a tendency for Western women as well as others in developed countries to form special groups of parliamentary women to introduce and work for women's issues. This does not mean that women avoid other issues but the major cause behind it, cleaning up messes, has long been relegated to women's work. For example, worrying over the young, the aged, the sick and the environment have suddenly risen to the top of the political agenda. Referring to one particular survey, Carlson (1990, p. 16) confirmed that "women are perceived to be better than men on these issues, as well as to have higher ethical standards and greater honesty." In addition to building up coalitions or caucuses, most of the individual women legislators in the Western world feel responsible for women's issues.

3.1.5.2 Multiple issues legislators

Multiple issues women legislators as those who are not confined to women's issues, are not compelled to take up those issues but deliberately support and work for them because they believe all issues are necessary for the well being of the society. Those women who fall in this category usually support issues brought by single-issue legislators. As Janine Haines, an Australian Senator put it:

Most of us were determined not to be portrayed as single issue politicians, nor as just another politician. We made our gender a plus willingly, if sometimes uncomfortably, becoming role models and capitalising on the fact that the uniqueness of our position made us natural focal points for the media (Haines, 1992, p. 181).

This is reminiscent of Kirkpatrick's (1974, p. 219) view that political women are not overtly masculine or 'grossly deviant' from other women. Dr Carmen Lawrence, the first woman Premier of Western Australia, kept the portfolios of women and children to raise the status of women and family and to show these areas are vital to government. Thus, many powerful women legislators can be found expressing their concern for women and welfare issues. In this traditional male bastion they have been successful by introducing their feminine identity. A few of their comments are quoted below:

"Our stereotype is finally in" stated by the twelve times winner powerful Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder indicating women's performance on women's issues in the Congress. She served in the male-dominated House Committee on the Armed Services (Quoted in Carlson, 1990, p. 16).

"Call me madam", replied Betty Boothroyd, a forthright, good humoured and patient Labour MP elected as Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons in 1987 when she was asked how members should address her. Later in 1992, the Labour MP Boothroyd, was elected as first woman Speaker of the House

in 238 out of 372 votes in the Conservative dominated Commons (Quoted in Haines, 1992, p. 136).

'My business is to get legislation through. My added business is to get legislation through to help women' stated by the Congresswoman Barbara B. Kennelly (Quoted in Rajoppi, 1993, p. 83).

Thus it is found that women who held powerful ministries and portfolios had also deep feelings and concern for women's welfare. Among them, Virginia Bottomley and Gillian Shephard became Secretary of Health and Employment Secretary respectively in the UK, Margaret Guilfoyle, the Australian Federal Minister for Finance, Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labour in 1933 in the US, Juanita Kreps, a specialist in labour economics served as a Secretary of Commerce, Elizabeth Dole, the former Transport Minister, Texas Senate President Pro Tempore Judith Zaffirini to name a few (Haines, 1992; Gordon, 1997).

There appears a new terminology of the way some women exercise power. Cantor and Bernay's study named this kind of power as 'Womanpower' (quoted in Rajoppi, 1993, p. 124). The study included twenty-five women who held high federal, state or local office in the USA, and for these women, power took on an expanded definition encompassing qualities of caring and concern which meld the importance of relationships to the ability to get things done. "Womanpower" is a new way to do business: effective, facilitating and non-aggressive. According to Rajoppi (1993, p. 125)

...powerful women have integrated typically female qualities of caring and nurturing with some male characteristics of straightforwardness and assertiveness, to redefine the concept of power that works for them. Most importantly, "womanpower" empowers individuals: it brings forth agendas and issues and combines an effective blending of qualities that is productive.

The Parsonian theory of power indicated that the outcome of power should be 'to get the things done' which is identical to womanpower theory. Parsons however, did not mention the traits and issues applicable to political power. When women realised that they are treated differently in politics because of their specific gender traits, they started incorporating those qualities into political power. By bringing welfare issues into public arenas, these women proved themselves more effective than those who only believe in 'getting things done'. Thus, 'womanpower' has become a blend. Like other multiple issues women legislators, Congresswoman Louise Slaughter of Rochester was an effective wielder of 'womanpower.' She sat on the powerful Budget Committee and

in 1992 in a closed-door caucus of the Budget Committee Democrats, Slaughter demonstrated her "womanpower" fighting for a budget increase for the National Institutes of Health. Rajoppi narrated the story:

The members of the caucus, twenty two men and Slaughter.....Soon after the start of the meeting, the members agreed to recommend an \$800 million increase. When it was Slaughter's turn to talk, she suggested that some of the recommended funding be dedicated for research into women's health problems including breast and ovarian cancer. Initially, there was a reaction of bewilderment, but she pressed on. According to Elaine Ryan, Slaughter's chief aid, she "was pretty insistent.....She was all alone at first, just making the pitch, looking at blank faces, and her tone and voice got more insistent." Slaughter used an analogy the men understood. She asked them to think of dying women in terms of war, that the number of victims of breast cancer in 1992 equals the number of victims names engraved on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. She hit a sore spot. When she finished, the women aides applauded and then one of the congressmen recounted his wife's losing battle with breast cancer. Everyone listened and soon after the caucus agreed that of the \$800 million increase, \$500 million would be dedicated to women's health research. The bill was passed by the budget committee and later by the full House (1993, pp. 125-6).

3.1.5.3 Legislators who avoid women's issues

There are several reasons for women avoiding the tendency to specialise in women's issues. The almost universal faulting of women's fear and naivete towards power make some women leaders over-conscious about their performance because they do not want to be branded with the same kind of stereotypical characteristics. Dixon (1992, p. 220) pointed out that:

Modern female politicians have chosen different strategies to deal with these problems. Deprived of access to many male political networks, women who climb the visible political ladder are likely to be fairly tough. They must by that time have worked out some way of dealing with the disruption that the demands of modern political life impose on their domestic circumstances - this is generally true of "successful" women in other spheres.

Their toughness does not mean they avoid women's issues as we observed earlier that the multiple issues women legislators are tough as well as inclined to women's issues. There are some other reasons behind women's avoidance of welfare issues. Evidential support in favour of women's political marginalisation is one of the significant reasons for many women legislators' preference to avoid women's issues. For example, once they show a special affinity towards women's issues those bounce back to them every time. Later on they are often put on welfare committees because of their gender, ignoring their individual choice and abilities. Many renowned and competent women legislators around the world were treated in this stereotypical manner. For instance, British MP Barbara Castle recalled that when she was in local government before the

Second World War, she was put on the committee on maternity and child welfare on the basis that she was a woman. She wished to be accepted as a competent person with political interests, which were not in the least dictated by her feminine experience. She was much more interested in transport and industry than in consumerism or education which she resisted taking. Similarly, Judith Hart thought that it was only by tackling the areas beyond those traditionally assigned to women that she could establish herself as a credible politician (Stacey and Price, 1981, p. 167-8). Despite the formation of the CCWI in the US, the Republican Congresswoman Marge Roukema of New Jersey, said she did not want to be identified with family and women's issues (Rajoppi, 1993, p. 91). It is evident from Sawyer (1994, p. 81) that Australian women legislators became impatient with the motherhood roles imposed upon them and a number of them attempted to escape from the brand of 'women's issues' by declaring that gender was irrelevant to politics. In the past, Israeli women legislators organized themselves in caucuses within central parties, but these bodies have been manipulated to isolate women from the centers of power by assigning them to handle issues such as education, social welfare, and health, considered 'feminine' and secondary to central national issues, such as security, foreign affairs, and economics. On the whole, women's organisations are referred to and presented as service and/or welfare organisations rather than as political ones (Lemish and Tidhar, 1999, p. 389).

However, there are more in-depth reasons for women to avoid women's issues. The women who fall into this category try to copy the men, as traditional politics is a male bastion. They think that their feminine qualities and uniqueness are their weakness:

Traditionally, the male model of behaviour is used as the standard. Someone who wants to compliment a woman is likely to say that she's "as good as a man." And all too often, to emulate men in the corporate world women give up their feelings of connection, warmth, friendship and empathy. The assumption is that male power is the only legitimate kind of power and that women are afraid or unable to seize it (Rajoppi, 1993, p. 125).

Pioneer women in this category include Indira Gandhi and Margaret Thatcher. Indira Gandhi's short and quick response to the question of how it felt to be a woman Prime Minister, was "I do not regard myself as a woman. I am a person with a job" (Carras, 1995, p. 56). She liked to make the point that a head of state should never think of belonging to any particular sex, religion or caste. Both Indira Gandhi and Margaret Thatcher had negative attitudes towards women and the feminist movement. Thatcher asserted that the women's movement had done nothing for her. She indicated that

women themselves were responsible for the shortage of women politicians in Australia, the USA and the UK. Also she noted somewhat disparagingly that she was 'the statutory woman' in the Tories' shadow cabinet and she was to remain the 'statutory woman' in her own cabinet for eleven years (Haines, 1992, p. 135). Gandhi's references to women's problems remained marginal. She did not pursue a feminist agenda and took every opportunity to deny any interest in feminist issues. While commenting on a forthcoming conference on women's issues she declared herself as 'allergic' to such meetings (Carras, 1995, p. 55).

Another striking feature common to Gandhi and Thatcher is that both failed to appoint any of their female colleagues to positions other than junior minister. Regarding Indira Gandhi, Malhotra (1989, p. 190-1) stated that "since all her senior cabinet and party colleagues were men - surprisingly, no woman held a high rank in her government though several were appointed as junior ministers - she could not deal with any of them at the level of intimacy which was quite common in the cases of Nehru and Shastri and their colleagues." The much quoted compliment to Indira, that she was the 'only man in a cabinet of old women', was a back-handed one and really centred on women's handicaps in politics. Haines (1992, p. 134) commented on Thatcher that "neither was she interested in helping other women to enter politics or, once in, rise up the ministerial ladder." Women leaders' habit of ignoring other women can be supported by one of the theoretical aspects brought forward by Rajoppi (1993, p. 124) that:

Occasionally, you'll find a woman in power who distances herself from other women in less prestigious positions or even demeans them. Such a person is insecure, uncomfortable with power.

If we accept this theory then all women leaders should fall into this category which would not be a fair determinant to assess them. Including the Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, some women leaders have appointed a high percentage of women ministers in their cabinets. The behaviour of Thatcher and Gandhi may be exceptional.

On many occasions, Indira Gandhi showed that her gender did not in any way influence her policies or her political conduct. In fact, gender was a complex factor for her leadership in two ways. First, she built up her career in a patriarchal political system where women were compelled to keep aside their gender for survival. Secondly, while the Indian sub-continent does not appear to be kind to ordinary women, it loves to

celebrate stronger women as goddesses (Falguni, 1995, p. 10). Therefore, although Indira Gandhi played a good woman role, she was also seen as ruthless and authoritarian. Also, projecting women's interest means downgrading their status, which may be a tradition of prominent Indian women politicians in general. Kishwar (1996a, p. 14) quoted a few other contemporary women politicians who appear to be as authoritarian as Indira.

Careers graphs of Indira Gandhi,...and a host of other prominent women in power politics is a testimony that women become as vicious, corrupt, and authoritarian as the worst of men when they occupy positions of power which demand little or no accountability. Such specimens of the female gender serve neither the cause of women not that of society..... The presence of this type of woman is neither worth fighting for nor celebrating.

Indira was not even eager to be addressed according to her gender. Many of her cabinet ministers called her 'Sir' and during her visit to the White House with President Johnson, she stated that he could address her as 'Sir' too (Malhotra, 1989, p. 191). Even today, such behaviour is not unusual among Third World women leaders those who appeared as a single woman figure in a party structure to fill a political vacuum created by the death or imprisonment of their male family members. This is reminiscent of Genovese's proposition that some women leaders find it difficult to challenge the patriarchal power structure because "to do so would have been political suicide" for them (quoted in Drage, 1997, p. 46).

On issue grounds, some Western women politicians have employed both strategies to overcome gender stereotyping-adopting masculine traits and emphasising their competency on typically male issues. It is learnt from Huddy and Terkildsen (1993, p. 125) that Geraldine Ferraro, the Democrats vice presidential nominee in 1984, emphasised her tough stance on crime throughout the campaign; Ann Richards portrayed herself as a tough political opponent in the 1990 Texas gubernatorial race by engaging in mud-slinging against her opponent, Clayton Williams; and support for the death penalty was one of Diane Feinstein's central issues in her 1990 bid for the governorship of California. Carras (1995, p. 54) found the psychological reason for such behaviour was that:

As new entrants in the political arena, women have been anxious to show that they are as good at the game as men are.....in trying to win at the men's game, women often sacrifice those talents and traits that distinguish them as women, and through which more innovative approaches could be devised to tackle the unique problems facing the world....

There is another group of women legislators who avoid women's issues. Wealth and influence based upon a kind of political socialisation in the family is a well-known source of power. Roces (1998, p. 302) stated that Mrs Marcos in her role as the wife of a politician was a powerful political agent with a public role although she also exercised power behind the scenes. Later she metamorphosed into a politician herself when she became Governor of Metro-Manila and Minister for Human Settlements. After the fall of Marcos she also ran successfully for congresswoman in 1995. Dahl in D'Amico (1995, p. 18) labelled Indira Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto as *patrician* leaders, which means they came from a wealthy socio-economic background, were highly educated and were socialised in political families where power passed along from parents to children. Cantor and Bernay (1992) found that the familial source of power is mostly the 'comfort zone' for women leaders (cited in Drage, 1997, p. 44). The authors indicated that it is easier for a woman to play as a leader to her children at home and that makes one confident in developing leadership. For children, not only do the all-girl families appear to be a factor in developing high achievers, leadership is also associated with the first-born child. Neale (2001, p. 145) synthesised information from several researchers that parents give more responsibility to the first-born girls, and more opportunities to the first-born boys. But as an end product both of them appear to be high achievers at the same level. Being the only child Indira Gandhi might have exercised leadership from her childhood. Richter (1990-91, p. 531) described how Indira Gandhi used to stand on tables and deliver political speeches to the servants, and thus she was politicised during her childhood. Later educated at Harvard and Oxford in comparative government Benazir Bhutto, had the same kind of socialisation from her politically powerful father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Carras (1995, p. 48) highlighted the importance of *patrician* origin as politically ambitious women have a good chance of entering the male dominated political world if they are supported by a liberal political family.

However, the women in this category cannot overcome the influence of a deceased husband or father. In the Indian Sub-Continent superstitions that they are unlucky, surround widows. Therefore, to minimise resistance to the idea of a woman-as-leader, Sirimavo Bandaranaike who became the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka in 1960 following the assassination of her husband "did not challenge traditional male-female roles, but developed and maintained an identity through that of her late husband. She was not

perceived as ruling in her own right but was deliberately portrayed as a surrogate, a replacement, her husband's alter ego" (Haines, 1992, p. 130). Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina in Bangladesh, Corazon Aquino in the Philippines have taken power through the widow's walk. Women in this category are usually expected to implement the same policies as their deceased husbands or fathers. Therefore, they did not challenge any fundamental male-female roles.

Most recently Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri is another of this kind who rarely takes any decision on her own but mostly relies on an inner circle of advisers. Her competency is also under question and she has been criticised for avoiding media interviews and public speaking. Media find it hard to judge her leadership style. Gender related issues are yet to be pronounced on by her. One of her party colleagues described her thus:

She always uses her father as a role model... She lives very much in his shadow (quoted in Mcbeth and Djalal, 2001, p. 14)

In terms of cultural and religious barriers, it is learnt that most of the women leaders who originated from religiously conservative cultures were not effective in addressing gender issues. Religious conservatism in Pakistan appeared to be a big hurdle for Benazir Bhutto. With her enormous popularity she could not abolish Shariah law (a deadly legal weapon used against women), polygamy and child marriage due to the resistance of fundamentalist Muslims. Despite a Pakistan People's Party's (PPP) manifesto calling for the equality of genders, Benazir Bhutto was confronted by the Mullahs. Their constant resistance made her unable to take initiatives that might benefit women (Richter, 1990-91, p. 537). Therefore, unlike Western women legislators, women legislators in developing countries find it difficult to work for women's issues either collectively or individually.

3.2 Sources of women's power and effectiveness

Despite considerable barriers women legislators have acquired a substantial amount of power from different sources. As we have seen individual power is exercised by resource, position, expert and personal power. It is observed that as time has passed women legislators have widened their interests and served in diversified committees to exert resource power. Position power is exercised by cabinet ministers and stepping-

stones theory for a leadership path is not established. Women however, appear to be effective in diversified portfolios. Particular careers for achieving leadership are also not always a fact. The US and the UK based scenario of leaders' law and business backgrounds may differ from that of our proposed countries. A large number of New Zealand MPs of both sexes including the Prime Minister, Finance Minister, Foreign Affairs Minister and the Speaker of the Parliament came from a teaching background. Their teaching background and effectiveness does not seem to be a matter of question. Educational and professional achievements are recognised sources of expert power. Many researchers found a positive correlation between women's labour market participation as professionals and women in legislatures (Moore and Shackman, 1996; Matland, 1998b). Women's share of employment in professional jobs varies considerably across the world, ranging from around half in Europe and North America to one-quarter in the Middle East and Africa as of the late 1990s. This appears to be part of the reason why women have obtained greater political representation in Europe and North America (Kenworthy and Malami, 1999, p. 257). Familial connection, a significant source of personal power usually found in South and Southeast Asian leaders, although helping to increase a person's self-esteem and confidence is less desirable in legislatures. Surprisingly, most of the South and Southeast Asian nations have produced women leaders from familial sources.

Among the group power, quotas, reserved seats, women's networks and movements are important sources of power and effectiveness. Wängnerud (2000) found these are the best strategies for women legislators in Nordic countries. Outshoorn (1991, p. 112-9) referred to the case of the Netherlands where, in 1977, the women's organisation of the Labour Party managed to get a resolution passed by the party congress to require 25% women candidates on all lists. This led to some debate initially. But from the first parliamentary debates on women's policy onwards, it became obvious that politicians liked the idea of quotas for women, it being a prospective policy, which can be quantified and evaluated easily. The success of the increasing numbers of women in legislatures in several Scandinavian countries is an outcome of the political parties adopting formal quota systems which ensured at least 40% female representation on party lists (Darcy et al., 1994, p. 154-5; Rule, 1994b, p. 20; Burness, 1997, p. 213; Norris 1997, p. 221). Jones (1996) cited the Argentine Ley de Cupos (Law of Quotas) as a singular example of a national law requiring all political parties to adopt a minimum quota (30%) for women in electable positions on their party lists for the

election of national deputies. The law represents an important and previously untried interim method in the world-wide struggle to achieve gender parity in legislative bodies. In the meantime, some positive outcomes have been evident from Argentina's 30% quota law. Del and Feijoo (1998, p. 42) confirmed that:

When it was first implemented, the quota law increased women's representation in the Chamber of Deputies from 5.5 percent in 1991 to 12.8 percent in 1993.....The enforcement of the quota law made possible the election of 80 women representatives from a variety of political parties; they constituted 26.4 percent of the constitutional assembly.

Several observers have noted that in Scandinavia and some other European countries, conservative parties have become nearly as likely as leftist parties to nominate women (Skjeie, 1991b; Sainsbury, 1993; Darcy et al., 1994). The UK Labour Party's recruitment procedures, adopted in 1993, included a 'short listing' of only women's names for nomination in certain favourable constituencies. This affirmative/positive action resulted four years later in 101 female Labour MPs, which brought female representation to 18% in the House of Commons. The Conservatives, who followed their regular procedures, elected only 14 women MPs (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995, pp. 73-4). The story is quite similar in American state legislatures, some of which use multimember districts, with votes cast for candidates, rather than for party lists. The number of women elected from multimember districts tends to be larger than from single-member districts, and states that have switched from multimember to single-member districts have usually experienced declines in the number of female representatives (Welch and Studlar, 1990; Matland and Brown, 1992; Moncrief and Thompson, 1992; Darcy et al., 1994).

Quotas not only increase group power by increasing women's numbers, they also increase women's personal power. Some instances of increased personal power have appeared in the case of Bangladeshi women legislators. Some women in these countries had been appointed MPs previously but after serving one term they contested constituency seats and won. Chou and Clark (1994, p. 167) stated that over the years in Taiwan, the female candidates have been able to transform themselves from tokens elected because of the quotas, to competitive candidates.

Women's mobilisation to support other women in elections can bring striking results and women's groups and networks have a positive impact on women legislators' policy

issues. Among the top-ranking stateswomen Brundtland (Norway), Finnbogadottir (Iceland), Robinson (Ireland) and Cresson (France) were identified as having roots and strong support from women's movements (Kelber, 1994, p. 12). Before the February 1990 election in Japan, local groups in coordination with others in their network sponsored public forums where they invited women candidates to speak and to debate male politicians. They also worked with women politicians already in the Diet in a mutual effort to support women candidates (Ling et al., 1992). During the US Congressional election in 1992, one women's group raised six million dollars on behalf of women candidates (Burrell, 1994, p. 2). It is noteworthy that women's groups and networks work to bring more women in the parliament from the expectation that women will address more women's issues. In many contemporary legislatures this has been proved effective when women's representation reached the critical mass. Although no significant transformation of parliamentary culture has appeared, Scandinavian countries and several state legislatures in USA have experienced the benefit of critical mass theory when women's representation crossed 15% (Thomas, 1991; Bystydzienski, 1992a; Rosenthal, 1998). The findings above support the sub hypothesis that: *'group power is an important basis of an individual power.'*

Political parties and women friendly electoral systems can bring more women into the parliament and thus become recognised as important sources of institutional power. This is the contribution of system and strategy approaches as identified by Wängnerud (2000). Membership in political parties has proven to be a very effective method of increasing women's numbers in legislatures. The fact that women in Scandinavian countries have a relatively high political representation in parliament is an indication that women are strongly integrated into the party system. According to the IPU (2002a) statistics, in Australia, women hold 25.3% of the seats in the Lower House of parliament, which is elected via a single-member district system. In the Upper House (Senate), which is elected in multimember districts, women hold 28.9% of the seats. The influence of the electoral system on the social composition of legislative elites, particularly the representation of women, is well established.

The nature of the regime and the socio-economic conditions of a particular nation is important to create a conducive environment for women's participation and greater influence. In general, women in developed countries have this opportunity. In

developing countries however, women face resistance from the state and police brutality, for example (Hensman, 1996).

3.3 Summary and conclusion

This chapter began with some specific findings of why women are seen as different in legislatures. These included: women are less effective due to reproductive roles; women are different from men in exercising power; women are not aggressive enough; women serve only in softer portfolios; and women have a bias for women's issues. The majority of women exercise legislative power differently from men as an avenue for cooperatively achieving concrete objectives. This objective has a particular feature which is to 'get things done' (Ling et al., 1992, p. 59). We observed from 'womanpower' theory that every issue needs some initiative and persuasion. The failure of Korean women to pass the Family Law is an example where women were unable to convince their male counterparts. Here one obvious quality felt to be necessary is speaking ability and this, which seems to be an indicator of power, is lacking in many women legislators.

Women's issues also need power and influence. Unless women contribute their effort and hard work, thousands of welfare issues may not appear on the legislative agenda. These issues are in no way less important than others. Welfare states like Norway and New Zealand count their social welfare ministers as powerful. On the other hand, the superpower US considers the secretary of state the most powerful. Issue-based power measurement is not new but the degree of issue preference is. It is a general stereotypical view to interpret women's political work with a negative connotation. For instance, Solheim (2000, p. 3) stated that U.S. senator Phil Gramm criticised U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno, saying that "she is a very sweet lady, but should not be attorney general because she cares more about day care than about violent crime." Reno has never said that childcare is more important than prosecuting violent criminals, but she has said that one root cause of crime is the lack of day care and other social services to low-income children. The global tendency is to undermine women by connecting them with welfare issues.

Many of the examples cited in this chapter are US based. This is because extensive research in this field has been done in the USA. But we have also picked up some examples that women are not a homogeneous group, there is diversity in their attitudes;

so with policy making. Moreover there are important cultural variations. Culture can influence personal, group, institutional and structural sources of power. Even development can be affected by culture. Issue preference, which is an outcome of socialisation and culture, is supported by stereotypes. Stereotypical feminine roles in legislatures are not desirable. Because focusing only on women's issues means that women may not be fully representing all their constituencies. Also, a legislator who brings only welfare issues may be recognised as a specialist in this area, her constituency might have other needs. Our hypothesis that *'representing women only may limit women's ability to fulfil their other representative roles'* can be supported when single-issue legislators strictly confine themselves to women's issues.

There was another indication for support of the sub hypothesis that *'group power is an important basis of an individual power'* which needs to be examined for the case of New Zealand. We therefore, intend to assess the all around effectiveness of women legislators. How do women exercise position, resource and expert power? Are they single-issue legislators? Are they different from male legislators in exercising power? New Zealand seems to be an ideal country to study these questions in terms of its significant number of women legislators. Therefore, these questions have been explored in the next three chapters (4-6) on New Zealand women legislators. In a later chapter we will make some brief comparisons with Bangladeshi and Norwegian women legislators.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOCIETAL BARRIERS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN THE NEW ZEALAND PARLIAMENT

New Zealand has attracted widespread attention for its gender equality. It has already had two women Governor-Generals and two women Prime Ministers, and the Chief Justice of the country is a woman. Prominent women executives are also leaders in the country's private sectors and New Zealand appointed the first woman bishop in the Anglican church. Thus, New Zealand scores highly in gaining the top positions for women in politics, law, business and even religion.

Prominent women of the country expressed opinions that women are capable and New Zealanders can judge merit, which results in a better gender balance than in most other places (Henger, 2000, p. 23). The scenario indicates considerable success in remedying gender inequality and it seems hardly any struggles and hurdles are left for women to overcome. In reality, a few talented women may have reached the top; this does not mean that the societal culture has changed. Many women remain dissatisfied with their overall position in society. Dissatisfaction is reflected by high achievers such as Governor-General Dame Silvia Cartwright, Prime Minister Helen Clark, and Chief Justice Sian Elias and confirmed by several gender researchers. All have claimed that barriers remain for women in achieving equality. To these high-ranking women, 'inequality' is a synonym for discrimination. Although they have expressed the view that the overt discrimination they experienced is a matter of the past, New Zealand has still a long way to go to achieve equality between men and women (Nolan, 2000, p. 304; Barkham, 2001, p. 21; Harris, 2001, p. 5). While people think that the number of women in the top jobs of politics is nearly right, they are not satisfied with women's numbers in the public service and companies (Cone, 2001, p. 16). The Official Yearbook of New Zealand states: "Women make up 51% of New Zealand's population. While women and men have equal status under the law, women have yet to achieve full equality with men in economic and social status, freedom from discrimination and access to decision making processes" (2000, p. 127).

Why is this claim made? As discovered earlier, patriarchal culture is the root cause of inequality in other societies that led to the development of the sub hypothesis that '*cultural and religious norms have a significant impact on women's political effectiveness.*' Do they continue to have any effects in New Zealand? We assume from our experience of previous chapters that inequality, underrepresentation, power, influence and effectiveness can also be affected by discrimination, cultural, institutional and other structural barriers. Therefore, we formulated another hypothesis that '*specific barriers hinder women's legislative participation and effectiveness.*' To identify those specific barriers, it is essential to verify how gender has been seen in New Zealand society and what barriers are faced by women in overcoming traditional prejudice and attitudes.

4.1 Gender in New Zealand

The concept of gender as a social construction based on men and women's biological nature applies equally to New Zealand as elsewhere. In New Zealand, male culture integrated two apparently contradictory constructions: the 'Man Alone' and the 'Family Man' (James and Saville-Smith, 1994, p. 15). The 'Man Alone' concept developed from the fact that during the nineteenth century a large percentage of Pakeha males remained bachelors due to a lack of females.¹ Until then Pakeha males had a macho image of masculinity involving the jobs of pioneers, bush-dwellers, sailors, whalers and sealers, shepherds and shearers. In those days when alcohol consumption was a significant single man's way of interaction, the home was recognised as pure. However, the fatherly figure of the Prime Minister Michael Joseph Savage (1935-40), promoted a stereotypical family man as a loyal and reliable provider and protector to a family, that is to wives and children. Thus the 'Man Alone' image of males turned into the 'Family Man' and this 'Family Man' image recognised males as breadwinners. Throughout the nineteenth century, men were the head of the family and controlled property in marriage. Under this patriarchal institution, care and the upbringing of children rested with the woman but the overall control remained with the man (Gillespie, 1980, p. 109; Phillips, 1996, p. 221, 238).

¹ The country's percentage of bachelors over 20 years of age was 46.3% in 1891 and 43.9% in 1901. In 1911, there were 896 females for every 1,000 males and 41% of males had never married. Ten years later the figure dropped to 32% and in 1936 this figure was 30%. See Phillips, 1996, p. 265; Chapman, 1999, p. 55.

On the other hand, based on women's stereotypical nurturant and maternal capacities, nineteenth century New Zealand women's lives were structured as dependent and privatised. They were also regarded as moral guardians of the family on the basis of the quality of morality and placed at home while men occupied public arenas. This kind of gender relationship which was based on domesticity, was seen as 'both natural and divinely ordained' (Park, 1991, p. 29). Even today, in the extensive literature of male-female relationships, female culture is referred to as the 'Cult of Domesticity' (James and Saville-Smith, 1994, p. 15). For Maori women, Blank (1980, p. 35) described a typical 1870s image of a woman who could cope with an autocratic husband, household and marae chores as well as ensuring the survival of ten to sixteen children. This image was a miracle to other women of the time and men regarded this as a symbol of a dutiful wife. Overall, domestic service was predominantly women's occupation and households were subject to patriarchal authority. As we discovered, *culture and religion* play major roles in shaping gender, let us examine their influence in the New Zealand context.

4.1.1 Cultural factors

As in other societies, cultural construction of gender in New Zealand was also influenced by some common elements and due to these specific interrelated and overlapping factors, women's visibility in public power structures is hindered. These elements are:

- *power in gender relations*
- *reproductive roles*
- *socialisation processes*
- *division of private and public spheres*
- *People's negative attitudes*

4.1.1.1 Power in gender relations

The source of women's power was always addressed in terms of relations with men. In addition to the 'Cult of Domesticity', the class system in New Zealand has made a significant contribution to gender inequality. Although the first settlers brought the English closed class stratification with them, due to the far more open society of New Zealand, the lower and upper classes of society were less visible. However, among women, owners'

wives of large farms took control of servants and domestic workers, mostly women. A popular slogan of those days was “Jack is as good as his Master” and “Jill is as good as her Mistress” (Wilkes, 1994, p. 70). A few big farm owners and senior civil servants belonged to the middle class. In a nearly socially egalitarian colonial society, married women of this middle class category maintained a class position based on that of their families (Wilkes, 1994; Mulgan 1997). During the period after the First World War, male culture followed the principle of social equality based on gathering in public bars, and later on team sports and wartime armed forces. For example, Phillips (1980, p. 236) argued that after integrating into teams, Maori and Pakeha males maintained a classless ‘natural leadership’ on the rugby field and thus race and class were submerged in their mateship. However, the crucial difference in social relationship appeared among men and women. While men became equal irrespective of race and class, Phillips argued that equality among men enhanced the gender divide. Until the 1880s and 1890s, both Pakeha and Maori women were deprived of equal status; treated as objects of sexual conquests and occupied a class and status of an inferior and minor category (Phillips, 1980, p. 236; Park, 1991, p. 28).

To reduce this unequal gender relationship and as a response to social conflicts between men and women, the State intervened in a number of ways. The Municipal Corporations Act (1867) had allowed women to vote, and this was put in practice in both the Nelson and Otago provinces. The 1876 Education Act was implemented to deliver equal educational opportunity among boys and girls and to enhance women’s entry into various professions. While Maori women had property rights at that time, under British law Pakeha women could not hold any land after marriage. Therefore, Pakeha women suffered hardships while their husbands traveled for work from station to station. A number of groups were vocal on introducing women’s property rights law and finally the Stout-Vogel Ministry passed the Married Women’s Property Act 1884. Again, based on women’s nurturing and caring nature they were given the right to vote in elections in hospital and charitable boards that were established in 1885.² However, women’s suffrage in 1893 faced tremendous hostility including from the then Premier Richard Seddon. Among several points of concern, opponents objected to sharing power with women who were dependent and subordinate to their husbands. This fear worked in two ways, which was spread widely throughout the

² These were a few of the significant State interventions. See Grimshaw, 1987, p. 9; Park, 1991, p. 28.

media during 1892. Firstly, women's voting rights could replace men from outside and secondly, men might have to take low valued household activities. Overall, men feared the distortion of traditional family life and described the suffrage right as unwomanly, leading to home negligence and the unsexing of women (Grimshaw, 1987, p. 75).

Throughout the nineteenth century, the vast majority of adult men were involved in the labour market, and this paid labour gave an economically independent image to the male culture. This contributed to the masculine gender being regarded as superior, and the subjection of wife to husband was the traditional concept. Economic dependency ensured women's secondary status. Due to women's subjection, the independent voice of women was rarely heard in the nineteenth century. Although they were inspired by overseas influences, culturally their submissive nature hindered them from mobilising any association. An observer of the women's movement in Britain and the USA, Mary Ann Müller of Nelson wrote a series of newspaper articles during the 1860s under the pseudonym 'Femina' promoting John Stuart Mill's views on women's rights. She subsequently failed to act publicly throughout the 1870s due to her husband's disapproval and disclosed her real name only after her husband's death (Page, 1996, p. 2). With patriarchy, women remain under men's control looking after men's households and children. Any deviation from that, it was thought, could result in men's powerlessness over women; therefore, men had a tendency to resist women's advancement from their traditional domestic life to public life. Throughout the period of women's parliamentary rights movement from 1894 to 1900, opponents' main arguments were based upon sexual innuendo and on the proposition that women MPs would use their feminine charm and beauty to influence their male colleagues' views. This could lead some male politicians to follow an attractive woman member's direction rather than consider the merits of the bill. Male politicians considered this as a threat to the masculine gender. Others argued that women did not need any more power because the right to vote gave them enough power. They were also suspicious about women's political capability.³ Gender biased socialisation, people's negative attitudes and all other elements of these kinds had a combined effect of portraying women in a powerless negative connotation.

³ They thought if women eventually entered into parliament, they would not work with men on equal terms rather they would concentrate only on areas related to their gender i.e. the social welfare type issues. See Wallace, 1993.

4.1.1.2 Reproductive roles

During the 1880s the male anti-suffragists argued that reproductive and domestic roles were women's primary function. The debate stressed women's physical makeup that suited them to the domestic sphere and child bearing and rearing activities only. The Premier Richard Seddon adamantly denied women's demands, and citing their reproductive roles he advised them to do their nurturing job by marrying good men. He did his best to oppose the women's suffrage movement. While he held a firmly patriarchal attitude at home, he cleverly used New Zealand's good reputation overseas by boasting of women's influence on social and humanitarian legislation. He strongly opposed women's influence on any political, financial or legal matters except in 'womanly' spheres regarding nurturing and morality (Nicholls, 1996, p. 76).

This propaganda based upon women's reproductive roles continued. While women's organisations suffered a setback, in 1907 the brilliant, domineering Frederic Truby King, founded the Royal New Zealand Plunket Society after the name of Lady Victoria Plunket, wife of the Governor-General and mother of eight. The society campaigned for responsible and educated motherhood that diverted the women's movement, resulting in a quick spread of the Plunket system of infant care. By 1914 Plunket had over 50 branches (Nicholls, 1996; Page, 1996). During this period information about the women's movement was scarce and Truby King's Plunket ruled. Women's domestic role became prominent at the expense of any more public one.⁴ By 1947, 85% of Pakeha and a growing number of Maori babies were on Plunket's books. Plunket also taught women to be disciplined and organised at home just as employers in industry (Nolan, 2000, p. 27). Plunket's enormous influence affected women irrespective of their class. Even now it is one of the most popular community organisations. We may also see that a significant number of women MPs were involved in Plunket society.

None of the early women MPs entered parliament at child-bearing age; rather they entered only after their children were grown up. It seems women at all times considered this issue

⁴ The Plunket Society was based on the philosophy of providing an important supportive association for mothers. It emphasised a strongly domestic and maternal concept of womanhood by claiming that the destiny of the race was in the hands of its mothers. As a result women became more careful and attentive towards children and family. See Page, 1996.

carefully. Jenny Shipley spent months with a real dilemma over whether she would accept nomination for family reasons. Some women MPs even waited until their children grew older, for instance MP Katherine O'Regan confessed that she was not ready during her first nomination because her children were too young (McCallum, 1993, p. 207, 229). Only four women MPs have had children during their parliamentary life and all of them found it extremely difficult to do both jobs satisfactorily. Indicating her difficulty coping with baby and job, MP Elizabeth Tennet decided not to have another baby stating that "...if I wasn't an MP, I'd probably have another one" (Baysting et al., 1993, p. 39). It was a surprise to the childless MP Lianne Dalziel how Elizabeth Tennet, Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan and Ruth Richardson managed to have their newly born babies and cope with their parliamentary job. New MP mother Katherine Rich is the latest of this group who is always looking over her shoulder and trying to cope with the nurturing of her new born baby (Langdon, 2001b, p. 5).

However, it has been seen earlier that while the bearing of children is the sole biological responsibility of mothers, other than breast-feeding, child rearing can be shared by both parents. But the stereotypical socialisation process and Plunket's publicity led both men and women in New Zealand to believe that women should be responsible for child minding. In addition to that, there appears to be another element. Gold and Webster (1990, p. 74) found people's views of women's roles were two fold: equalitarian and traditional as displayed in Table 4.1. The traditional viewpoints emphasised biologically determined roles for women.

Table 4.1. Women's role according to equalitarian and traditional views

The equalitarian views	The traditional views
1. Sharing chores is one of the factors of a successful marriage;	1. A woman should not have a job, but rather should stay at home;
2. A husband and wife should have equal jobs.	2. She should have a lesser job than her husband;
	3. A woman should have children;
	4. During times of job scarcity men should have priority;
	5. A woman should be a full time family person;
	6. A woman's public career is unimportant.

Surprisingly, among the supporters of equalitarian views, although the majority supported men and women's equal jobs, very few supported shared chores. Due to this low support, many careerist women had to give up traditional families to avoid the guilt of depriving

children of care. Helen Clark, Lianne Dalziel and Judith Tizard decided not to have children because they believe that marriage and children are recognised as assets to professional men, but handicap women by interrupting their careers (Hughes, 1980; Myers, 1986; Baysting et al., 1993; McCallum, 1993). Similar views came from the Governor-General Dame Silvia Cartwright who believed that women can be wives, mothers and brilliant careerists but they cannot be successful with more than two of these at one time. Like Helen Clark, her choice of being childless was deliberate for the sake of her career (Barkham, 2001, p. 21). Although women's predominance in part time work helps to solve the problem of their dual role, these careerist mothers spend more time in unpaid work at home caring for children and undertaking domestic responsibilities than they spend time at work. The latest Time Use Survey of New Zealand demonstrated that 60% of men's work is paid while 70% of women's work is unpaid.⁵ Therefore, both Dame Silvia Cartwright and Helen Clark still believe that a successful career for a childless woman is a lot easier than for a working mother (Barkham, 2001; Ryan, 2001). It seems powerful women know where the inequality lies.

Although few people possess equalitarian views, there were extremely lucky women leaders, such as Jenny Shipley and Ruth Richardson, who benefited from their husbands' commitment to family and children. However, once elected into the parliament both Shipley and Richardson thought that if they could make it anybody should be able to make it. They downplayed the personal circumstances of the majority and were accused of failing to understand the structural problems of the society that cause women's disadvantages (Coney, 1997). Again some powerful women MPs like Christine Fletcher, Ruth Richardson and Fran Wilde were not committed to the 'Cult of Domesticity', but, along with other causes, their premature resignations were significantly connected with their family demands (Baysting et al., 1993; McCallum, 1993; Richardson, 1995). It was, however, not a difficult hurdle for some other women, as demonstrated earlier rich and upper class women in different societies benefited in managing domestic responsibilities by hiring maids. New Zealand is no exception to this as rich women always hired nannies and maids for child-sharing (McMath, 1991, p. 59). Several New Zealand women MPs such as Ann Hercus and Ruth Richardson hired nannies for their children and domestic help in

⁵ See Statistics New Zealand, 2001, p. 18.

addition to having supportive husbands. Jenny Shipley arranged a boarding school for her children. Unless their middle class social status and financial ability had permitted them to get this help they would have been caught up in the 'Cult of Domesticity' rather than in the parliament.

It is difficult for a working class woman with no alternative support for childcare to enter into parliament. Women are also debarred by traditional attitudes of the society that endorse women's sole responsibility towards children and family. The Plunket Society had an enormous effect on New Zealand women's socialisation towards their domestic role. So where does the stereotypical belief of women's unsuitability for public life on the basis of biology come from? In fact, it is not the reproductive role but the associated tasks regarding reproduction which are more prevalent reasons for women's lesser participation in public life. Time constraints and the financial inability to hire caregivers are significant for them. Examples may be found that due to these associated problems with childrearing some prominent women of New Zealand remained childless. Street (1996, p. 452) therefore, made a clear point that New Zealand women's under-representation in parliament is due to socialisation, gender roles and lack of child care.

4.1.1.3 Socialisation processes

Socialisation is a cultural process and to McMath (1991, p. 36) it is "a result of learning rather than instinct." Boys and girls follow the stereotypical sex role division of labour at home where mother cooks and looks after children, and father plays a major controlling role. Boys and girls pick up their fathers and mothers as their role models. Sex role stereotyping affecting the behaviour of pre-school children has also been observed in New Zealand; the play of young children differs markedly according to sex. By the time they enter the school system at five, their behaviour is already sex differentiated and their knowledge of 'sex appropriate' behaviour is well advanced (Hughes, 1980). Schools are thought to be the reinforcing institutions of gender differences between boys and girls by considering girls 'the weaker sex'.⁶ Girls follow the role models presented in textbooks and on television showing women spending their time in home making. They also follow the readily available role models of female nurses and teachers.

⁶ See McMath, 1991, p. 55.

Plunket Society designer Truby King and the Premier Seddon recommended two different kinds of standard for boys and girls, such as ‘virile qualities’ for boys and ‘womanly qualities’ for girls which was followed by the Department of Education (Phillips, 1996, p. 224). To develop these contrasting qualities, home science became a degree course in Otago University in 1912. Between 1916-17, schools adopted cooking, sewing and household management for girls. Also home science became compulsory for girls in high schools. As a result, girls were less likely than boys to take mathematics and science to an advanced stage and boys were seldom taught home economics (McDonald, 1980, p. 147-8; Phillips, 1996, p. 224). However, after 1975 the sex based course curricula were abolished from schools. Afterwards, subjects taken at school certificate level were very similar for boys and girls, but still there were differences at sixth and seventh form levels and in subjects taken for Bursary/University Entrance scholarships. Furthermore, girls are still influenced by everyday circumstantial socialisation and there are rumours that they are sometimes warned by their schoolmates that “it’s not good to be too clever at maths, the boys won’t like you” (McMath, 1991, p. 55). They are more likely to take English, biology, classical studies and art while higher percentages of boys study mathematics, physics and economics (Davey, 1998). Davey’s findings are also co-related with the latest census data where the most common field of study for women with a post-school qualification was health (22%); engineering and related technologies were the least common fields of study (2%).

Table 4.2. Subject choice of male and female students⁷

Subjects	Women (%)	Men (%)
Health	22	5
Management and Commerce	20	16
Education	17	4
Engineering and related technologies	2	33

New Zealand society is no exception in valuing boys more highly than girls by preferring girls’ *tomboy* nature and by faulting boys’ *girlish* nature (McDonald, 1980, p. 147). Researchers have found ‘sex appropriate’ behaviour in young children where there was

⁷ The table is built up from the data of Statistics New Zealand web site www.stats.govt.nz under Census 2001. The percentage crossed above 100 as several options are made by one person.

stereotyping but that women belonging to a higher economic status had the least stereotyped views.⁸ It is observed how the patrician class and wealthy family background helped different world leaders such as Indira Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto to transcend other societal barriers and they became cultural anomalies. Similar to other cultures, the class system has a specific consequence on New Zealand women's socialisation. Stirling (2000, p. 19) found a positive correlation between middle class boyless parents and an enlightened attitude towards girls. She indicated that there is a special socialisation process wherein boyless families, or where boys are younger in families, girls get wider education and career options. Girls in this environment develop high self-esteem, confidence and independent mind. This particular feature applies to Jenny Shipley, Helen Clark, Dame Catherine Tizard, Theresa Gattung, Margaret Wilson, Dame Silvia Cartwright, Jeanette Fitzsimons, Marilyn Waring and Merepeka Raukawa-Tait. Some top women in New Zealand have opinions that help confirm this finding.⁹ Nevertheless, although courageous political women's individual capability outweighs the stereotypical women's image, their number is still relatively very few.

Professionally, from the early days of European settlement, teaching has been one of the main occupations for women. Both teaching and nursing were seen as an extension of women's child rearing functions and did not challenge any stereotypes of women (Hughes, 1980, p. 123). Even today, contrasting work preferences are observed between male and female students. Although the most common type of work for both males and females is in supermarkets and other retail outlets, male students are more likely to work at newspaper and milk delivery and females do low paid baby-sitting (Davey, 1998). Throughout the decades women's low expectations originated from the sex-stereotyped socialisation process. Even entering into professions, specific socialisation still had an influence on

⁸ To avoid stereotyping, enlightened parents with independent minds and high socio-economic status do not accept women's stereotyping and go for professional careers. To acquire a professional career, financial ability is a must and this is usually associated with the middle and upper classes. See McDonald, 1980, p. 147; Stirling, 2000, p. 19.

⁹ 1. "If there is no boy in your early socialisation, that period which is so important in your life, then parents don't inadvertently discriminate and play out the gender roles" (Educationalist Alton Lee who had a younger brother).

2. "Because I didn't have brothers, my parents let me go on educationally" (Helen Clark, oldest of four girls).

3. "Bossy, stroppy" well-loved assertive eldest daughter (Theresa Gattung, oldest of four girls). See Stirling, 2000, p. 19.

4. "My father was resentful that he didn't have a son, and he wanted us to be independent" (Christine Fletcher, youngest of two girls). See Baysting et al., 1993, p. 17.

women's affinity towards the 'Cult of Domesticity'. In addition, women's responsibility to family and home created situational constraints of taking public positions. The government also acknowledged this fact that to accommodate childcare and domestic responsibilities, 73% of all part time workers are women.¹⁰ This puts women at a disadvantage in participating in public life activities at the same rate as men.

The paucity of supply of women as electoral candidates appeared to have originated from two distinct factors. Firstly, women's lack of self-esteem for a political career. Lack of self-reliance and boldness are generally recognised as essential factors that hinder women taking public office and due to gender biased socialisation, most women do not acquire enough self-esteem to participate in politics. Secondly, women's lack of interest in politics. In the past while a few ambitious and enthusiastic women like Ellen Melville and Elizabeth McCombs were interested, women were rarely sufficiently interested to put forward their names as parliamentary candidates. This was despite encouragement from different sectors. For instance, in 1934 an early issue of the *New Zealand Women's Weekly* featured an article entitled "Why Don't the Women Come Forward?" (Macdonald, 1993, p. 91). Among the early women MPs, Catherine Stewart, Mary Grigg and others specifically mentioned that they had no ambition to enter the parliament but their friends nominated them (McCallum, 1993). Moreover, not only early women but women in the recent past waited for someone to approach them rather than offer themselves as candidates. Belinda Vernon, a National MP who won in the 1996 election, had hesitated for years before standing. She confessed that it was due to a lack of self-confidence rather than any female prejudice (Henderson, 1999, p. 45). Women's unwillingness to offer themselves as potential candidates was causing supply side problems even in the 1990s and that concerned women MPs and leaders. In this the former National MP Katherine O'Regan asserted, "don't sit around and wait for someone to ask you - jack it up yourself!" (quoted in McCallum, 1993, p. 213).

Entering parliament requires considerable interest and consciousness in politics and unless someone is very interested, it is unlikely that he/she will make his/her career in politics, leading to a seat in parliament. Vowles (1993) carried out a specific study on gender

¹⁰ See the CEDAW Report on Status of Women in New Zealand, 1998, pp. 38-9.

differences in political behaviour by using the comprehensive data set of New Zealand Election Surveys (NZES) of 1963, 1981 and 1990. He found a significant gender gap in interest in politics. Although the overall percentage of interest dropped irrespective of gender, between 1963 and 1981 New Zealand women were 12% behind men in political interest (Table 4.3). The percentage was reduced to 6% in 1990. An increase in women's political interest may be an indication of increasing political participation i.e., reducing the supply side problem.

Table 4.3. Gender gap in political interest (%)

Year	All respondents	Women	Men	Gender gap
1963	38	33	45	-12
1981	31	26	38	-12
1990	15	12	18	-6

Source: Vowles, 1993, p. 124

In July 2002 the Colmar Brunton's Social Research Agency did a pre-election survey on interest and knowledge in politics under the MMP electoral system. Gender difference is significantly decreased in terms of interest, i.e., women's interests in politics is reflected in Table 4.4. Women possess almost similar interests to the mainstream respondents. The column of 'extremely interested' and 'quite interested' is remarkable in identifying women's interest in politics. This may have a positive impact on the supply side of women candidates.

Table 4.4. Interest in politics (%)

	Extremely/ very interested	Quite interested	Neutral	Quite uninterested	Extremely/very uninterested
All respondents	21	49	16	9	3
Females	20	50	16	10	3

Source: Colmar Brunton's Social Research Agency, 2002

However, women's knowledge about the MMP system appears to be significantly less than men which is displayed in all of the five aspects of the MMP electoral system in Table 4.5.

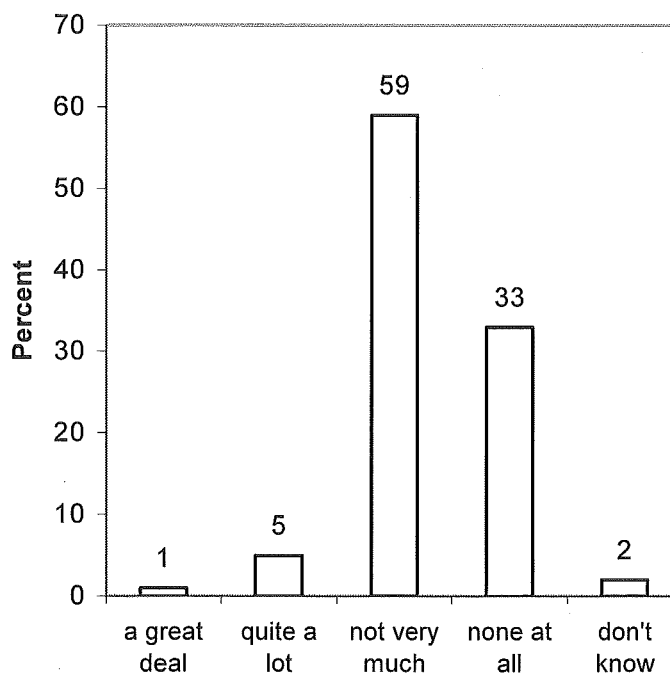
Table 4.5. Knowledge of the MMP system by gender (%)

	Knowledge of two votes	Know the purpose of both votes	Party vote is more important	Knowledge of party list's role	Know both criteria of how party gets into parliament
Males	77	75	59	57	36
Females	58	58	43	41	18

Source: Colmar Brunton's Social Research Agency, 2002

Political parties are recognised vehicles for entering parliament and might be expected to take initiatives reflecting the beliefs and values of the public. But they do not always seem to work according to people's expectations. Irrespective of gender, people in New Zealand have limited confidence in political parties, a fact reflected in Figure 4.1. Only 6% of people have quite a lot of confidence in political parties, indicating the lack of confidence is related to interest in politics.

Figure 4.1. Level of confidence in political parties



Source: Perry and Webster, 1999, p. 15

In this connection, a TV One opinion poll showed that New Zealand politicians are the least popular segment of society while professional firefighters are the most popular category (TV One, 2001). In the meantime one National Business Review-Compaq poll showed that politicians stood at 13 among the 14 distinct category of respect lists. Confidence, respect and popularity towards politicians also reflected in the parliament. The latest National Business Review-Compaq poll showed that people's confidence in parliament was only 22% while police scored the top with 71% confidence (Cone, 2002a; 2002b).

4.1.1.4 Division of private and public spheres

The stereotypical division of private-public spheres is also a reality in New Zealand. Both Pakeha and Maori women faced substantial patriarchal cultural opposition from the time of the suffrage movement to the parliamentary rights movement based on the private public sphere division. For Maori women, not only politicians but also the media played a hostile role towards their suffrage rights. During the final stage of the suffrage movement in 1893 when public interest was very high, *Korimako Hou*, a Maori newspaper, supported the politicians' position by encouraging Maori women to engage fully in the welfare of their children and grandchildren and to leave politics to their husbands, brothers and fathers as it was a complex matter (Rei, 1993). Male Maori parliamentarians expressed concern that the 1893 Bill might be passed without a provision for Maori women to vote on the Maori rolls and the bill was amended. When the bill reached the Legislative Council, Rāpata Wahawaha of Ngāti Porou and Hori Kerei Taiaroa of Ngāi Tahu, two Legislative Council members voted against the bill. Rāpata Wahawaha opined that the Maori women were nurturers, weavers and cultivators and were always excluded from sacred ceremonial duties. He believed that the vote might bring some unexpected burdens for Maori women. Again, during the parliamentary rights movement, one of the strongest arguments against the rights was that once women entered into the parliament, they would neglect their families (Rei, 1993, p. 30).

Chen (1989, p. 64) asserted that "in New Zealand, women suffer from the sex role stereotype that their place is in the home caring for children, while men suffer from the sex role stereotype that their place is in the paid workforce." This division of labour was not only imposed on women by societal expectations; women themselves believed in it. While women were struggling to get their parliamentary rights they had the stereotypical view of their own roles from the position of 'Cult of Domesticity'.¹¹ Marriage was women's main occupation in the nineteenth century New Zealand and women's devotion towards the family was reflected in many ways. For instance, in 1887, a Napier woman, Mrs Murdock, produced the first local cookery book named '*How to Please our Lords and Masters*'

¹¹ While nineteenth century feminists were struggling to remove barriers to participation in public life, they had no desire to alter traditional gender roles. Only unmarried women or those without dependants sought work outside the home while married women's status was recognised in relation to their home only. See Nicholls, 1996, p. 10.

(Carter and Maynard, 2001, p. 97). Similarly, women wanted to use their unique maternal identity as a 'mother influence' in politics (Nicholls, 1996, p. 10). They themselves had very firm ideas about what women MPs would concentrate on. They claimed that parliamentary legislation was not only related to roads and bridges but also to women, children and sick people. They promoted the idea that women would make a valuable contribution in areas such as housing and child welfare. Due to the prevailing cultural attitudes, the issue of entering parliament had less relevance to the lives of most women and thus they lacked a united voice. Wallace (1993, p. 6) supplied evidence that women's efforts to achieve election to parliament were not on the same scale as their suffrage movement. Only 300 signatures were contained in the petition to parliament in 1895; this was one-hundred times smaller in size than the broad-based suffrage petition. In this situation, women's groups spent a lot of time overcoming the counter arguments of their opponents, and only women actively involved in political life through groups such as the Auckland Women's Political League and the WCTU remained determined in their demands.

Despite the cost of the 'Cult of Domesticity', many women remain outspokenly committed to it. The 1975 Women's Rights Committee Report identified different contrasting opinions from women's submissions.¹² Indicating those conflicts of interests, during the parliamentary debate on 12 June 1975, Miramar MP, W.L. Young stated, "there are areas in which women themselves are quite divided; there are areas where women are apathetic to change, and some are even opposed to change...."¹³. Thus elements of the nineteenth century women's image are still prevalent in many New Zealand households. Dependency on breadwinner men is an advantage to some women. They run their own lives at home, which they consider their only social space. For example, in the 1980s, one housewife saw the benefit of her freedom at home where she organised work according to her own timetable while a man had to obey his employer. Another one was satisfied with ironing shirts and cooking meals for her husband. These women found worth in serving their financial security providers, receiving love, affection and social esteem (James and Saville-Smith, 1994, p. 89). Not only individual women have this kind of commitment towards the

¹² See the Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, 1975, Vol. IV.

¹³ See Parliamentary Debates (Hansard), New Zealand House of Representatives, 1975, Vol. 398, p. 2075.

‘Cult of Domesticity’, but the communitarian feminists¹⁴ wanted legislation to protect women’s domesticity. They were in strong support of women’s domestic education, Domestic Purposes Benefit (DPB) and family allowances (Nolan, 2000, p. 303).

It has been seen earlier that women’s interests on broadly defined welfare issues usually arise from their private sphere activities. But structurally, in a small parliament, there is less opportunity to specialise in a particular area and more incentives to develop wider interests. Here comes the difference between interests in particular issues and issue preferences. Interest does not mean they prefer to work on all of those. When they develop particular interests in a parliamentary career they do not follow their earlier issue preference. It is unlikely that women will work against their issue preference in the parliament unless their party loyalties compel them to do that. Therefore, although New Zealand women MPs were no exception in expressing their bias towards social issues they were not confined to those. A 1975 Women’s Electoral Lobby survey revealed the causes of women’s issue bias. It found that many MPs were scarcely concerned about women’s issues and held a narrow view of women’s role. Women MPs had sought for nearly fifty years to challenge their male colleagues in the House. Therefore, early women MPs had the feeling of sole responsibility for women’s issues. We saw earlier that issues considered as women’s issues are what those women care for. For New Zealand, Julian (1992, p. 406) mentioned few categories of women’s issues. Firstly, ‘traditional’ concerns shared by most women are family oriented, high prices for essential goods, unemployment, inadequate access to health and education services, poor housing or high rents and mortgages and lack of community support services. Political parties are usually concerned about these traditional issues. More articulate women are concerned about the second category i.e., adequate women’s refuge, rape crisis centres, child care services and women in decision making positions. There is a third category and not all women support them, abortion for example. In a recent study on New Zealand parliamentary women, Grey (1999) prescribed ‘parental leave’ and ‘child care’ as women’s issues. The following table demonstrates that in addition to their allocated tasks, some women MPs showed their interests towards

¹⁴ Communitarian and liberal, two distinct feminist groups have been appeared in Nolan’s study. While the liberal women demanded equal rights between men and women, communitarian group sought protection and the preservation of women’s differences from men. See Nolan, 2000, p. 299.

general welfare, children and women's issues (Table 4.6). This information has been gathered from published materials on women MPs' biographies and other publications.

Table 4.6. Women MPs' interests¹⁵

Serial No.	Name of the MP	Tenure as MP	Party Affiliation	Interest in welfare/women/children's Issues
1	Elizabeth McCombs	1933-35	Labour	Women's nationality upon marriage
2	Catherine Stewart	1938-43	Labour	Increasing children's allowances to low income families
3	Mary Dreaver	1941-43	Labour	Right for women to serve on juries
4	Mary Grigg	1942-43	National	Right for women to serve on juries
5	Mabel Howard	1943-69	Labour	Immigration of refugee and Central Europe children, equal pay
6	Hilda Ross	1945-59	National	Subsidy for the Plunket Society/Equal pay for women in public service
7	Iriaka Ratana	1949-69	Labour	All Maori issues including good housing, education and agricultural training for Maori boys and girls
8	Ethel McMillan	1953-75	Labour	Equal pay for women in public service
9	Esmé Tombleson	1960-72	National	Social security, multiple sclerosis
10	Rona M. Stevenson	1963-72	National	Widow's better earning, adopted child's birth certificates, state spending on welfare
11	Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan	1967-96	Labour	Maori issues including language, education and violence against children and women
12	Dorothy Jelichich	1972-75	Labour	Equal Pay, Matrimonial property bill
13	Mary Batchelor	1972-87	Labour	Equal Pay, Protection against domestic violence and rape
14	Marilyn Waring	1975-84	National	Abortion, matrimonial property act, human rights act, maternity leave, childcare
15	Colleen Dewe	1975-78	National	Formulation of National Government's policy for women, act on taking out of mortgages in women's own name
16	Ann Hercus	1978-87	Labour	Matrimonial property bill, homosexual law reform, pornography

¹⁵ See Haines, 1992; Baysting et al., 1993; McCallum, 1993; Davies, 1993; Dwyer, 1993; Wallace, 1993; Rei, 1993; Waring, 1994; Henderson, 1999; Taylor, 1999; Parliamentary web site at <http://www.ps.parliament.govt.nz/mps.htm>; The New Zealand Government Directory, 2001.

17	Helen Clark	1981-	Labour	Liberalisation of abortion, ministry of women's affairs, pay equity
18	Ruth Richardson	1981-94	National	Rape law reform, abortion law, domestic violence
19	Margaret Shields	1981-90	Labour	Pay equity, domestic violence, childhood education policy
20	Fran Wilde	1981-92	Labour	Rape law reform, homosexual law reform, domestic violence, crèche at parliament, ministry of women's affairs, adoption law
21	Margaret Austin	1984-96	Labour	Rape law, adoption law, sexual harassment in workplace, pornography
22	Anne Collins	1984-90	Labour	Family benefit, staff-to-class ratios for junior classes, abolition of corporal punishment
23	Judy Keall	1884-90, 1993-02	Labour	Sole attendance of midwives at normal births, homosexual law reform
24	Annette King	1984-90, 1993-	Labour	Employment policy for women, ministry of women's affairs
25	Katherine O'Regan	1984-99	National	Equal pay, matrimonial property act, domestic protection act, ministry of women's affairs, homosexual law reform, rape law reform, control of pornography, sexual harassment
26	Sonja Davies	1987-93	Labour	Women in police force, abortion, early childhood education, government support for women's refuges
27	Jenny Kirk	1987-90	Labour	Smoke free legislation, Sole attendance of midwives at normal births, pay equity
28	Jenny Shipley	1987-02	National	Early childhood education, control of pornography, matrimonial law, family law
29	Elizabeth Tennet	1987-96	Labour	Pay equity, EEO legislation, control of pornography, establishment of a crèche at parliament
30	Lianne Dalziel	1990-	Labour	Early childhood education
31	Christine Fletcher	1990-99	National	Children's rights to attend neighbourhood secondary schools, family birthing centre
32	Gail McIntosh	1990-93	National	Employment Contracts Act
33	Joy McLauchlan	1990-99	National	Censorship on pornography
34	Margaret Moir	1990-93	National	Employment Contracts Act
35	Judith Tizard	1990-	Labour	Women's access to good education
36	Ruth Dyson	1993-	Labour	Worked on Homosexual Law Reform Bill
37	Sandra Lee	1993-02	Alliance	Violence against women
38	Jill Pettis	1993-	Labour	Benefit for low income families
39	Dianne Yates	1993-	Labour	Women's electoral issues
40	Donna Awatere Huata	1996-	ACT	Women's refuge

41	Rev. Ann Batten	1996-99	NZ First	Women's involvement in peace activities
42	Phillida Bunkle	1996-02	Alliance	Women's health spokesperson
43	Dr Liz Gordon	1996-02	Alliance	Women's health, pay gap between men and women and education reform
44	Laila Harre	1996-02	Alliance	Women's peace movement
45	Marian Hobbs	1996-	Labour	Women's education
46	Robyn McDonald	1996-99	NZ First	Professional women's interest
47	Dr Muriel Newman	1996-	ACT	Housing and welfare
48	Tariana Turia	1996-	Labour	Maori women's cervical screening project
49	Helen Duncan	1998-	Labour	Women's education

The above table shows that of the 76 women MPs, 49 i.e. 64.47% dealt with women and children's issues. It also appears that women took a special interest in some areas like the Employment Contracts Act, benefits for low income families, housing and welfare and homosexual law reform. Although these activities are not entirely women's issues they fall under the category of broadly defined social welfare issues, and we mentioned earlier that women's interests cover the overall welfare of the society.

As it is elsewhere, time frame also had an effect on women's issue preferences in New Zealand. Horn et al., (1983) analysed women MPs' maiden speeches and found that in the 1930s, frequently they emphasised 'women' and 'young people'. In the 1940s, their speeches reflected people's individual needs and problems. This emphasis began to alter during the 1950s with the major shift in concern towards the specific needs of the electorate. From the 1950s to the 1980s they emphasised economic issues on a local, national and global scale, the power of the economy and its influence on policy decisions, multi national corporate power, closer economic relations with Australia, defence and security issues. During the 1970s and 1980s, they were influenced by the second-wave of feminism, which demanded the right to control their own fertility, good childcare and shared domestic duties. During this period, more than two thirds of the women MPs emphasised women in their maiden speeches as an area of special concern. Thus the main priorities they found were the electorate, women, and the MPs' own political parties. It seems that over time women have widened their issue preference a great deal by shifting from stereotypical women's issues to broad based policies of all areas.

What did women MPs think of women's issues? There is an erroneous tendency in popular belief that every feminist is confined to women's issues. As veteran feminist Marilyn Waring put it, "...all issues are of course of concern to us, and we generally have a different point of view on all issues.....Many politicians and civil servants would like to contend that we are concerned only with caring and nurturing, and do not understand a great deal about other issues. What rubbish! We have strong opinions on expenditure on armaments instead of education, strong opinions on the upgrading of back country roads as opposed to motorway extensions, strong opinions on adequate suburban bus transport, on taxation matters, on priorities for development aid" (Waring, 1985, p. 26). Judith Tizard and Fran Wilde expressed similar views.¹⁶ Helen Clark who favoured a wide range of issues, declared: "I am a politician of the centre left and I'm proud to call myself a feminist" (quoted in Henderson, 1999, p. 229). Although women's interests for certain issues is shown in Table 4.6, those issues did not appear as their primary tasks. They worked for those issues in addition to their assigned tasks. Thus a majority of women MPs including Ann Hercus, Fran Wilde, Ruth Richardson, Helen Clark, and Judith Tizard did not acknowledge that any particular issue is a women's issue, rather they termed all issues women's issues. To them every issue can affect women and, being MPs, they believed that they should be interested in everything. Although not all of them considered themselves feminists, most women MPs admitted to recognising 'a thread that binds them' (Baysting et al., 1993, p. 1). Practically however, they do not seem to fall into the category of single-issue legislators as they work for a wider range of ideas.

4.1.1.5 People's negative attitudes

Women's inferior status was one of the original obstacles for male opponents not accepting them as parliamentary counterparts. They thought that women's physical characteristics would make them inferior MPs as they would not be able to cope with constant long working hours. However, as women's capability in serving on Charitable Aid Boards, Education Boards and also Borough Councils was long established, apparently, there was

¹⁶ "I am not prepared to have someone say to me, 'Good housing policy is feminist, therefore I reject it.' What a load of garbage. Good housing policy is about human beings not having to worry themselves sick to keep a roof over their heads, so that they can think about getting their kids an education, getting health care, all the things that make life possible. So I see it as a cohesive whole." (Judith Tizard). "Early childhood education is the major area. It is not just good for women, it is good for the whole society. But the women MPs pushed it, that was our policy" (Fran Wilde). Quoted in Baysting et al., 1993, p. 147 & 174.

no reason to bar them from the parliament. Bearing this in mind, soon after the 1893 Electoral Act was passed those women's groups which were actively involved in the suffrage movement, became active in demanding that women voters be allowed to stand for parliamentary election. In addition, during the Liberal era New Zealand was known as the 'social laboratory'¹⁷ of the world. Due to this pride, a few liberal politicians had a desire to be the world's pioneer in allowing women to sit in the parliament. They argued that if they did not, some other country might win the race (Wallace, 1993, p. 8). Therefore, between 1894 and 1900 some liberal politicians from different parties brought forward eight separate bills proposing women's right to enter into the parliament. But these few liberals were over-ruled by more conservative elements, members of rural constituencies and Premier Seddon.¹⁸ As a result, none of those bills passed at the committee stage.

Women's hurdles were not over with the gaining of parliamentary rights in 1919. It took 14 attempts by women in as many years before Elizabeth McCombs won a by-election in 1933 (Burgin, 1967, p. 35). Rosetta Baume and Ellen Melville were two among the first three women to stand for parliament in 1919 and Ellen Melville stood 7 consecutive times. Elizabeth McCombs stood in 1928 and again in 1931 and every time faced opposition from patriarchal cultural attitudes. In 1928, the Reform candidate's strong argument against her was that she lacked a property stake in the country and in 1931, an independent Labour candidate E. L. Hills opposed her, claiming that he followed Hitler in believing that a woman's place was in the home. After a short illness James McCombs died in 1933 and the Labour Party unanimously decided to nominate Elizabeth McCombs for the by-election. Her long involvement and services to the Labour Party warranted her selection apart from all other considerations. Despite the Coalition Reform Party's strong campaign against her, McCombs won with an overwhelming majority which some media analysed as sympathy due to her 'special circumstances' i.e. her husband's death (McCallum, 1993, p. 7).

¹⁷ Visitors from many parts of the world such as France, America and England arrived in New Zealand to observe the 'advanced' reforms. See Nicholls, 1996, p. 72.

¹⁸ Some criticised the parliamentary move by regarding the bills as "trifling with the question of putting members of parliament into petticoats." See Wallace, 1993, p. 11.

Maori women's hurdles were even more difficult, as it was not until 1935 that the first Maori woman, Rehutai Maihi, stood as a candidate. Older Maori, who believed that women should not enter politics, opposed her candidacy and she polled only 2.4% of the votes (Wallace, 1993, p. 28). In 1949, when Iriaka Ratana sought the nomination for her late husband's seat of Western Maori, in spite of Ratana Church support, the Labour Party was afraid of Maori cultural aversion and named a male non-Ratana candidate. Iriaka reminded the Labour Party about the power and importance of the Ratana name and threatened to stand as an Independent Ratana candidate. That was enough to change the Labour Party's decision and it nominated her. Her National Party opponent took the chance to criticise her on the Maori custom and cultural angles.¹⁹ She faced opposition from many Maori who claimed that being a woman she could not represent them. They also criticised her for taking on a political role when she was the mother of a large family; this meant she would ignore her family. Even Princess Te Paea opposed her candidacy on the grounds that it was not appropriate for a Maori woman to lead a war party. Iriaka handled all criticisms against her by saying "since the Maori had accepted the Treaty of Waitangi from a woman (Queen Victoria) they should have no difficulty accepting a woman MP" (Wallace, 1993, p. 33). She finally won the seat with 68% of votes (Rei, 1993, p. 50; Wallace, 1993, p. 33). However, when she first rose to speak in the parliament, the Arawa and other iwi left the gallery expressing the belief that in Maori culture, women's role was not compatible with involvement in public speaking. Earlier, Elizabeth McCombs faced similar opposition from the leading members of the Arawa tribe (McCallum, 1993, p. 8).

That was the start. However, as women advanced they had to continue to bear the legacy of patriarchy. As we can see, a typical patriarchal cultural attitude is reflected in the notice placed in next page. The exact date of it is not known but it was collected by the Society for Research On Women (SROW) from the Alexander Turnbull Library.

¹⁹ They used a traditional Maori proverb against her, "if the hen crows screw her neck." Wallace, 1993, p. 32.

NOTICE

TO

EPICENE WOMEN.

ELECTIONEERING WOMEN

ARE REQUESTED NOT TO CALL HERE.

They are recommended to go home, to look after their children, cook their husband's dinners, empty the slops, and generally attend to the domestic affairs for which Nature designed them.

By taking this advice they will gain the respect of all right-minded people—an end not to be attained by unsexing themselves and meddling in masculine concerns of which they are profoundly ignorant.

HENRY WRIGHT.

103, Mein Street,
Wellington.

People thought of women only as wives and mothers, a trend that continued into the 1970s. The force of this view came as an attack upon many women candidates including Ann Hercus. She was reminded on a number of occasions, especially by older men, that she ought to go home to the children as she was thought to have abandoned her children and husband (McCallum, 1993, p. 139). In 1975 when Helen Clark was campaigning for the Piako electorate, she was not allowed to address several service clubs as women were barred from these exclusive male domains. When she went to address workers at the Kaimai tunnel project, she was prohibited due to a superstition that the presence of a woman would bring disaster (Wilson, 1983, p. 215).

Although discrimination is a complex phenomenon to prove, normal societal prejudice and discrimination also seem to be reflected through political parties. Before the Women's Parliamentary Rights Extension Act was passed in 1919, many men had alleged that women should not be allowed that right. Once women had the right there was no such direct denial but a tendency to avoid and ignore women's presence in politics persisted everywhere. Historically, the New Zealand parliament has been dominated by well educated, middle class, white males (Jackson, 2001, p. 78). Why is this so? Although there was no evidence that voters in New Zealand rejected women, McLeay's (1993, p. 53) anecdotal evidence suggested that New Zealand candidate selectors followed the international trend: "male selectorates believe men rather than women to be electorally successful, that male selectorates choose candidates in their own images, and that women find it particularly difficult to break the grip of incumbents." Placing women into unwinnable and impossible seats by the party selectors arose from the usual assumption that a seat is safe with "a white man in middle age, with a wife, a family, and a dog for the photo" (Catt, 1993, p. 24).

In the past, few women possessed the required qualifications, such as political experience, to qualify for a job. That might have a positive correlation with the supply side problem. But these days women have wider participation in education, the job market, party activities and local government, and still their representation in the parliament remains unequal. Is it due to discrimination against women candidates? Both through the recruitment and nomination processes the major parties created substantial difficulties and obstacles to women entering parliament (Aitken, 1980b, p. 202). Political theorists did not

hesitate to blame the gatekeeper role of male dominated political parties for nominating fewer women, and thus inequality was perpetuated by the party system (Miller, 1993, p. 63). One study of Hill (1980) showed that women in the past had to go through a tough selection process to prove them all rounders. She stated, “if a woman can run the gauntlet of the socialisation process, share household and child-rearing responsibilities, and obtain the necessary experience in public life to convince party officials of her ability, the findings from this study suggest that she will meet no resistance from the New Zealand electorate” (Hill, 1980, p. 16). In reality few women could satisfy those selection criteria. This discussion partly supports the sub hypothesis that, *‘political parties have a prejudice against nominating women as electoral candidates.’* However, more specific discriminatory attitudes of political parties towards women will be discussed later in the women’s party activities section in chapter five.

4.1.1.5.1 Negative attitudes in the parliament

Women’s hurdles were not over upon entering the parliament. Parliamentarians’ activities and behaviour also reflected societal culture. Sexist comments, alleged incompetence and placing women into stereotypical women’s work were found to be predominant areas where women were discriminated against.

It seems relatively young and outspoken women MPs are the most prominent targets of sexist remarks and character assassination. Early women MPs such as Elizabeth McCombs, Catherine Stewart, Mary Dreaver, Mary Grigg, Mabel Howard, Hilda Ross and others, rarely accused their male colleagues of making sexist comments. A SROW (1986, p. 33) publication on the Study of Political Women found that older women who were born before 1932 were less likely to experience discrimination and sexism in their political lives than younger ones. But overall, women of all ages had to fight some sort of resistance by men. For instance, when Mabel Howard first entered the parliament in 1943 men would not tell her the location of the women’s toilet and addressing older women MPs as granny and auntie was common (Baysting et al., 1993, p. 138). MP Sonja Davies had to fight against it on a number of occasions. Discrimination and sexism were widely applied to National MP Marilyn Waring who entered the parliament at age 23 in 1975. She had difficulty accepting Prime Minister Robert Muldoon’s combative political style. Abusive

comments like, 'trendy academic liberals' and 'beady-eyed feminist'²⁰ were frequently used against her. Women MPs of both National and Labour such as Katherine O'Regan and Sonja Davies witnessed dreadful discrimination against Marilyn Waring and felt sorry for her.²¹

Wilson's study proved that parliament was not attractive to most of these women who were highly critical of it. For instance, Helen Clark, called it an 'archaic institution' and to Marilyn Waring, parliamentary procedure was 'an insult to the intelligence' (Wilson, 1983, p. 218). Among other barriers, women considered parliament a male-oriented, rule ridden, hierarchical institution, which was alien to them. Sometimes, they were even treated as badly as a different species. To Helen Clark it was a reflection of the male MPs' family life where women played a subordinate role because in those days most politicians' wives were not involved in any sort of paid work.²² In 1984, Anne Collins in her maiden speech mentioned, "I was amazed that in this place of all places a woman couldn't walk past a group of blokes without being judged and commented on" (quoted in Baysting et al., 1993, 79). She saw that a lot of National women MPs lodged complaints as they were very upset at the way the MPs were behaving and commenting on their sex life in general. Personal attacks and character assassinations by male colleagues and the media were objectionable to both National's Ruth Richardson and to Labour's Margaret Shields. As a woman Finance Minister, the media were more interested in what clothes Ruth Richardson would wear to present the budget than its content (Davies, 1997, p. 156). Helen Clark experienced male chauvinism and numerous double standards as there was far more attention and unnecessary comment paid to women's appearance than to their political competence (Light, 1998, p. 22). Character assassination is still a popular choice of some MPs. Most recently, Labour's Georgina Beyer claimed, "I don't find the chamber an incredibly seductive place because of the adversarial nature....the character assassinations that go on and the nastiness that gets exchanged across the House. I don't particularly like being

²⁰ See McCallum, 1993, p. 130.

²¹ They indicated that Sir Robert Muldoon had never understood women. MP Katherine O'Regan stated, "he advised her to bite the dust and not put her head up until the dust was gone, just continue working.... I did see the discrimination that Marilyn suffered." MP Sonja Davies stated, "my heart just aches for people like the early women MPs. Like Marilyn and before her" Quoted in Baysting et al., 1993, p.77 and p. 138.

²² See Baysting et al., 1993, p. 12.

nasty to people” (quoted in Langdon, 2001a, p. 3). This reinforces previous work that women are less tolerant of personal attacks than men.

4.1.1.5.2 Aggressiveness and power

‘Aggressive versus emotional’ debate was another area of negative attitude towards women in the parliament. Through the sex-stereotyped socialisation process, boys learn aggression as part of their manly behaviour while for girls submissiveness is considered appropriate. Chen (1989, p. 67) held this kind of socialisation of boys responsible for domestic violence. Still why is aggressiveness expected? As in other societies, aggressiveness has been used as a synonym of power. Women’s emotional nature constituted a fear leading to objections to women’s suffrage right. While the National Council of Women (NCW) sent several high powered delegations to the premier between 1903 and 1906 demanding equal pay, appointment of women to the position of justices of the peace (JP) and parliamentary rights, Seddon denied their demands and specifically warned women seeking JPs positions that their emotions could disrupt their judgement. In the past, male MPs frequently criticised women MPs for not being sufficiently aggressive. They claimed, “aggressiveness and bluntness must be the characteristics of a member of a parliament” (Burgin, 1967, p. 4). This was applied to the first woman MP Elizabeth McCombs although she was firm and determined (McCallum, 1993, p. 5). In those days when women were an extreme minority this allegation could not be easily answered. However, later, women MPs responded effectively to this issue.

The theoretical framework of this research contended that effectiveness, power and influence do not necessarily mean aggressiveness. Many New Zealand women MPs, including Marilyn Waring, have declared that an assertive manner is preferable. She stated, “you need to communicate well, you need to have the courage of your convictions, you should not find yourself intimidated. You need to be assertive, not aggressive or passively submissive. If you are confused about this, or need to be confirmed in your own judgement, go to a course with a woman who has a good reputation as an assertive teacher” (Waring, 1985, p. 39). Similarly, Helen Clark, who suffered many attacks during her parliamentary career, opined that: “As a female leader of the opposition I can’t really operate the way a man would in the same role. The public doesn’t like women who attack or who are aggressive....I could not get anywhere with a political style which was based on

attack, even though the role of the opposition is to oppose, because coming from a woman it's seen differently" (Helen Clark quoted in Light, 1998, p. 22).

As with the international tendency it is only women who are stereotyped as emotional and not aggressive. Both Marilyn Waring and Helen Clark experienced this double standard. Marilyn Waring experienced parliament as very negative and stated that women who weep in parliament are labeled emotional and lacking self-control. Men who weep are labeled 'moving' (Waring, 1994, p. 20). A similar evaluation came from Helen Clark, that when men cry in public it is seen as a sign of great humanity and when women cry it is seen as a weakness. She is quoted in Light (1998, p. 22) as claiming that "Douglas Graham has a wee sob every time there is a treaty settlement and people think, 'what a great man'. Richard Prebble cries when obituary speeches are made in parliament and no one ever comments on this."

It seems aggressiveness is a monopoly of men, and women in general avoid being aggressive. A local government councillor expressed her views why women are not aggressive. The mother of two mentioned ".....because of their many commitments women did not have energy to waste on being aggressive on the council.....never seen a woman councillor lose her cool around the council table – it was usually a man" (quoted in Grant, 2001, p. A1).

4.1.2 Religion

Religion, as noticed from different cultures, has been, and still is, a barrier to women's rights. However, New Zealand appeared to be an exception to this as clergymen treated women relatively better than other countries. Despite Seddon's argument from a religious viewpoint that nature itself rather than society made women physically weaker than the 'Lords of Creation' (Page, 1996, p. 42), many church people argued in favour of women's suffrage. Among them, in 1878, Presbyterian Minister Dr James Wallis (quoted in Grimshaw, 1987, p. 16) asserted that there was a negligible class prejudice, and far less racial discrimination in New Zealand than in any other country he had visited, therefore, outdated sexual prejudice should not be allowed to continue. When Mary Leavitt, the American based WCTU representative arrived in New Zealand in 1885, public meetings, women's circles, and gatherings were organised chiefly among Presbyterian,

Congregational and Methodist churches.²³ Religious pressure groups, including the WCTU, were actively involved in campaigning for women's suffrage. The churches even encouraged women to play an active part in politics. For instance, in 1893 the Roman Catholic Bishop of Christchurch, Dr Grimes, addressed some one hundred Catholic women and others outside the church urging them to enroll and use their vote (Grimshaw, 1987, p. 98). When women used to withdraw from the paid workforce on marriage, many church organisations involved these women in a range of formal and informal social activities. The aims of these organisations were to focus women's social life as well as to promote women's interests in public policy (Mulgan 1997, p. 41). In addition, those religious doctrines prohibiting women's leadership in the church seem flexible. New Zealand became the world's first in appointing a woman Anglican Bishop who took charge in 1990 in the Dunedin Diocese. Bishop Penny Jamieson herself acknowledged that women in New Zealand's main churches have been pioneers in gaining leadership roles. For instance, women have been ordained in the Methodist church since 1958, the Presbyterian church since 1964 and the Anglican church since 1977. She however, accused the Catholic church of following overseas conservatism (Jamieson, 1993, p. 65). While religion may still have set the women's movement and women's position lower in general, globally New Zealand stands better in relative terms.

Low religious affiliation had long been the case, but over the years both sexes have become less likely to attend church in New Zealand. According to the 1991 Census only 6-7% of males and 14% of females would be in church on a Sunday, together making up 10% of the population (Webster and Perry, 1992, p. 11). Thus, interest and active involvement in religion in that sense is at an historical low in the population, making New Zealand one of the most secularised societies in the world. Vowles (1993, p. 127) suggested that growing secularism might have a tendency to make people less conservative in their political views. While support for women's rights decreases with high religiosity, low religiosity has been considered a promoting factor for other areas such as women's movements. In another survey, significant denominational differences in attitudes to socio-political affairs appeared among religious people. Methodists and Catholics are markedly more likely to have participated in political action than the average, while Anglicans, Presbyterians, Other

²³ See Macdonald, 1993, p. 32.

Christians and Baptists, are less likely to have so participated. Although Catholics are basically conservative in attitudes to social change, their greater political activism is identified as a little surprising in New Zealand (Webster and Perry, 1989).

The following denominational categories in Table 4.7 have been observed in terms of people's affiliations. These figures are for affiliation only and do not indicate active involvement. Only major denominational groups have been shown in the table 4.7. To avoid confusion a few other intra-denominational groups are not shown in the table.

Table 4.7. New Zealand people's affiliation to religious denominations²⁴

Name of denomination	People's affiliation (%)
Anglican	15.6
Presbyterian	11.1
Catholic	12.9
Methodist	3.1
Baptist	1.3
Pentecostal	0.8
Ratana	1.3
Latter Day Saints/Mormon	1.0
Buddhist	1.1
Brethren	0.5
Jehovah's Witness	0.4
Assembly of God	0.4
Salvation Army	0.3
Seventh Day Adventist	0.3
Hindu	1.0
Muslim	0.6
Jewish	0.1
Object to answering	6.4
Not stated	5.6
No religion	27.5

Gender issues are a major source of political differences between regular church-going people and others. Traditional values have in one way or another been based upon theological doctrine and, for many, this doctrine is: "Woman's place is defined by the child-bearing ability god gave her" (Webster and Perry 1992, p. 21). This gender ideology is expressed in the form of sexist beliefs that women bear children that family care is their prior duty, that career is less important to women and that men have greater rights to jobs. Sexist believers resisted several political movements of women. For instance, a group of

²⁴ This table is compiled from the data of Census 2001. It includes all of the people who stated each religious affiliation, whether as their only religious affiliation or as one of several affiliations. Where a person reported more than one religious affiliation, they have been counted in each applicable group.

Christian fundamentalist women who believe in the submissive role of housewives, traveled in busloads to ruin the New Zealand Women's Forums²⁵ organised by the Minister of Women's Affairs Ann Hercus and friends in 1984. These women were subscribers to the New Zealand Christian women's magazine *Above Rubies*, which promotes and encourages family, motherhood and raising children from a Christian viewpoint (Benland, 1987, p. 169). They were showing opposition mainly to abortion and the ratification of CEDAW. A male opponent physically attacked Ann Hercus herself.²⁶ The Labour Party's Working Women's Charter²⁷ was criticised by churches, parish priests and ministers of religion. Religious women's groups mounted a strong campaign against the Charter. A Catholic newspaper *The Tablet* also played a significant role in publicity against the Charter (Davies, 1993, p. 302). It is therefore, clear that as in other countries, fundamental religiosity is an important source of traditionalism in women's roles and rights. Although the number of religious fundamentalists is relatively few in New Zealand, their extreme commitment and enthusiasms have political impacts as they are conservative in protecting traditional family structures and gender roles (Mulgan, 1997, p. 45).

Since the churchgoers support traditional families with children, what do they think of childlessness? To the 30-40% of committed weekly churchgoers who possess conservative traditional beliefs, women in society fall into two categories 'respectable' and 'less respectable' (Webster and Perry, 1992, p. 38). Women with a marital status [with children] (married, widowed, and engaged) are considered 'respectable' and those in a situation such as separated, divorced and de-facto relationships are considered 'less respectable'. However, whatever the origin of these categories, it applies not only to churchgoing people but it is reflected throughout society including the media. A number of women candidates had to face this prejudice. The battle was even harder for young and unmarried women. Even a widow without young children or an unmarried career woman often faced criticisms and was regarded as odd. During the 1960s, an unmarried woman in parliament had to

²⁵ Public forums that any woman could attend were organised and financed by the government and held in all main centres throughout New Zealand. The government's policy, its implementation and priorities on women's affairs were discussed in these forums. Fundamental Christian sects sent busloads of their women to disrupt these forums and attack the policy. See Benland, 1987, 225-6.

²⁶ See McCallum, 1993, p. 143.

²⁷ The Working Women's Charter added the controversial clause of women's right to decide on abortion. This made the anti-abortion feminist and church groups furious. See Davies, 1993; Macdonald, 1993.

encounter the prejudice that she was there because she could not get married. Although she would be considered for nomination, other women would regard her independence, assertiveness and ambition with disgust (Burgin, 1967; Gustafson, 1986). Helen Clark faced tremendous opposition during her 1981 election campaign. As a single woman she was verbally attacked and accused of being a lesbian, of being unstable and unable to settle anything. She felt compelled to get married. A lot of personal criticism stopped after that (Myers, 1986, p. 158-9). She also had to face another prejudice in the national media: that of childlessness. Just before the national election in 1999, during a 'Holmes' debate with Jenny Shipley on 23 November, Helen Clark confronted the issue of her childlessness squarely and in a convincing manner that she is a family person and enjoy the company of her nieces and nephews. A male leader would not have to face this sort of offensive question (Harris, 2000, p. 80). It appears however, that women MPs were able to ignore criticisms made by a minority of churchgoers about 'respectable' and 'less respectable' categories since quite a few of them chose to be childless.

The gradual change of both culture and religion is an indication that unlike Nordic countries these systems are not static in New Zealand. This partially fulfils the requirement of the sub hypothesis that *'systems rather than strategies are the key to success behind women's significant legislative representation in New Zealand.'* However, to bring changes in systems, women's own activities through mobilisation and demonstration are significant. Therefore, strategy is also important. To address the hypothesis fully, more discussion on the specific strategies to enter the parliament is cited in chapters five and six.

4.2 Summary and conclusion

This chapter looks at the societal barriers in terms of the hypothesis that *'specific barriers hinder women's legislative participation and effectiveness'*. As in other countries, gender culture is a major factor in New Zealand politics. It affects the power in gender relations, of women's reproductive role, of a stereotypical socialisation process, of private-public spheres, of people's negative attitudes, and of issues of aggression and emotion. Historical facts demonstrate that for New Zealand women of both Maori and Pakeha cultures, reproductive and domestic roles were thought to be ideal and deviation from that was considered disastrous for the society. Through the 'Cult of Domesticity', this culture

remains dominant and is a difficult barrier for women's public careers. Also due to sex-biased traditional patterns of the socialisation process, women themselves suffered from lower levels of political ambition, self-esteem and confidence. Those are necessary prerequisites for public life. A few of those who overcame the legacy of the 'Cult of Domesticity' were socialised to be independent, backed by their supportive family in terms of both wealth and positive attitudes.

A select committee report on the role of women was widely circulated in 1975 by the Labour government. The finding was that the major cause of inequality between men and women in public life was conservative and inappropriate attitudes rather than legal discrimination, and no legislation can overcome inherent prejudice.²⁸ Sexist and discriminatory comments and attitudes both in political parties and parliament were the outcome of that inherent prejudice. In particular the suggestion that *'political parties have a prejudice against nominating women as electoral candidates'* will be fully explored in the next chapter. Although attitudes have not entirely changed, James and Saville-Smith (1994) have argued that the interface between male and female cultures and their substance has somewhat altered; only a minority of families now fall into the category of a stereotypical normal family of father in paid employment and mother looking after the children and doing housework. This also indicates that New Zealand society does not exactly follow traditional patriarchal families where women remain under men's control and raise men's children. Increasing numbers of female solo parents have changed the traditional image of male heads of households. An increased number of female headed households is an indication of a flexible patriarchal family bond; nevertheless, the 'Cult of Domesticity' associated with motherhood is still identified as the main obstacle to women's earning power and promotion prospects. Due to the conventional division of labour in the family and segregation in the labour market, many women suffer from lesser resources of time and money. This may cause a supply side problem in politics. However, the stereotypical negative attitudes against women's public life activities that originated from culture and religion do not seem to be major barriers to women's advancement in New Zealand.

²⁸ See the Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, 1975, Vol. IV and Parliamentary Debates (Hansard), New Zealand House of Representatives, 1975, Vol. 398, p. 2075.

The system approach has made a significant contribution. Dynamism of culture is evident in New Zealand and among the things that have been changed over time, two are significant. The hostility towards feminist ideas and arguments is not as open and unrestricted; and sexist remarks are disliked in public meetings (Macdonald, 1993, p. 12). Street (1996, p. 455) judged these changes as being in favour of a political culture that reduced women's hurdles to a great extent. Moreover, whilst women's dependency on men gave considerable legitimacy to patriarchy, increasing industrialization, married women's property rights, and educational opportunities gradually freed women from patriarchal family bindings. Women's dependency on men was reduced to a great extent by converting this dependency to dependency on the state through the DPB and other benefits. In addition, due to the influence of the first and second-wave of feminism, the advancement of women could be observed in every sector including paid employment and business. Thus the sub hypothesis that *'cultural and religious norms have a significant impact on women's political effectiveness'* seems to carry less weight for New Zealand women. However, it is essential to examine the impact of culture on New Zealand women and society through our primary research.

In the 1970s girls were taught that they could do anything and the public still bear the perception that a gender barrier does not exist. In reality however, 'girls can do anything' is a challenge, which is very difficult to achieve. For most women, the 'Cult of Domesticity' remains a barrier, as we have found there is a significant influence of socialisation and people's stereotypical attitudes create expectations for women to undertake particular tasks. If girls do better, society accepts that more readily than ever before, but the attitude is 'Do It Yourself' (DIY) albeit with some state support. At least, people's expectation towards girls' devotion to the 'Cult of Domesticity' indicates that.

The next chapter highlights how New Zealand women used the different sources of power to become effective.

CHAPTER FIVE

BARRIERS TO THE EFFECTIVENESS AND POWER OF WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN THE NEW ZEALAND PARLIAMENT

New Zealand was the first national state in the world to allow women to vote in parliamentary elections in 1893. Lipson (1948, p. 169), who considered this event as “proclaiming itself the first British country to regard the sexes as equal in the presence of the ballot box” assessed this equality as superior to that of the US.¹ However, although the women of New Zealand received equality of suffrage, it did not give them the right to stand as candidates in parliamentary elections. Wallace (1993, p. 3) pointed out that “for 26 years, until the Women’s Parliamentary Rights Act was passed in 1919, women were second class voters.” Not only that, it was not until 1933 that the first woman was elected to the House. Even up until the early 1980s, only a very small number of women entered parliament. The imbalance of political participation between men and women compelled women to form a women’s political party in the 1980s (Macdonald, 1993, p. 7).

Today, the picture of New Zealand women is somewhat different. The country earned the 19th position among 162 nation states in the UN Human Development Indicators on women’s achievements (UN, 2001). Although equal numeric representation of women compared with men has not been achieved, with 30.8% parliamentary representation they have reached a critical mass numerically. However the other aspects of the critical mass theory, such as the postulation that women can make a difference by giving a feminine shape to the parliament and by bringing more policy benefiting women and children, have to be examined. While a few women of New Zealand have reached the upper echelon of power, a question relates to their effectiveness in the parliament. Do they perform their legislative tasks effectively? As effectiveness is the ability to exercise power, our hypothesis that *‘women’s effective legislative representation can be assessed according to their ability to exercise power through selective legislative tasks’* has to be examined. Four legislative tasks and qualities (i) holding of cabinet positions,

¹ See Lipson, 1948, p. 489.

(ii) select committee assignments, (iii) speaking ability, and (iv) overall reputation have been identified to assess women legislators' power.

To perform effectively, legislators acquire power from different sources. They can be individual, group, institutional and structural. Wängnerud's (2000) found the group strategy is highly successful in Nordic countries. The sub hypothesis that '*group power is an important basis of an individual power*' is therefore, targeted to test against the New Zealand case.

Another question can be raised, as legislative representatives to what extent they became the specific representatives of women? The answer to this question may help in the analysis of the hypothesis that '*representing women only may limit women's ability to fulfil their other representative roles.*'

5.1 Representation

Following the introduction of the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) electoral system, the 46th (1999-2002) parliament had a total of 37 (30.8%) women members.² With this result, New Zealand stands 8th globally³ in women's parliamentary representation just after the Scandinavian countries and Germany. It is not unimpressive compared to other industrial democracies; however, being the pioneer of women's suffrage and also given that women constitute more than half of the population, the parliament remains underrepresentative of women from the typical or mirroring sense of representation (Mulgan, 1997, p. 133).

Since the inception of the Parliamentary Rights Act in 1919, there has been concern about women's continuous underrepresentation in the parliament and the plurality system has been identified, inter alia, as a barrier against the effective representation of women.⁴ The MMP electoral system was introduced partly to overcome this problem. Three of the ten criteria used by the Royal Commission on the Electoral System in

² The overall percentage of male and female MPs immediately following the general election of 1993 was 78.8% and 21.2% respectively. See The New Zealand Electoral Compendium, 2000, p. 157 of Electoral Commission.

³ See the IPU 2002a web site at <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

⁴ For the Report of the Royal Commission on the Electoral System, see the Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, 1986, vol. ix, p. 17.

recommending MMP were related to effective representation and are relevant to this study. They are:

- Effective representation of minority and special interest groups;
- Effective representation of Maori;
- Effective representation of constituents.

The Commission categorised women as a special interest group and acknowledged that the identification of an individual representative with their group was likely to impact upon their effectiveness as a representative. 'Politics of presence' was thus a recommendation by the Commission as essential for modern democracy. Catt (1997a) interpreted this first criterion as the idea of an MP acting as a mouthpiece for group views, with some desire for the group-reflecting role. The second criterion, effective Maori representation, includes the special need for Maori to be heard from their own viewpoint. In the past, representation of constituents has generally been related to geographical representation. The report stressed the role of agent and introduced the concept of accountability. Under MMP, the Royal Commission expected all three forms of representation (mirror, symbol and agent) would be achieved. We intend to address representation in both its numeric and active forms. To be an effective legislator it is not enough to be elected. An effective legislator exercises power and influence and at the same time is held accountable for his/her activities. Also previously we have identified that in addition to women's normal representative work those who form caucuses across party lines are eager to work together on women's and welfare issues. They have a great possibility of serving women. Now it is time to check women's representation in the New Zealand parliament through a set of questions:

- Do New Zealand women MPs feel a responsibility to represent women?
- How do they represent their political parties?

New Zealand women acquired political power and influence from diversified sources. In every case, we intend to highlight women's hurdles and the techniques they have adopted to overcome those hurdles. However, we will test these sources with the general theoretical framework we have formulated earlier. This includes:

- *Sources of individual of power*
- *Sources of group power*
- *Sources of institutional power*
- *Sources of structural power*

5.2 Sources of individual power

While discussing sources of individual power, *resource, position, expert and personal power* were identified as crucial. Although these four components are often interrelated, for the sake of discussion we are going to address them under separate headings.

5.2.1 Resource power through select committees

Strong party representation is an important characteristic of the New Zealand parliament. The domination of the two-party system has ended with the adoption of MMP, which promoted multi-party politics in the parliament and within select committees. Parliament in New Zealand is primarily about the representation of the political parties. At the commencement of each parliament a permanent parliamentary committee known as the Business Committee chaired by the speaker is formed by the representatives of all parties of the house. This committee later appoints the members of 13 select committees. Under MMP the select committees have acted with a greater degree of independence. Unlike the US Congressional committees, party discipline is the most important factor, not the individuality or seniority of the members in the New Zealand parliament. Therefore, researchers claimed that New Zealand runs a successful and distinctive system of parliamentary committees (Palmer and Palmer, 1997; Jackson, 2001; McGee, 2001). However, although party influence is significant in committees, appointment of committee chairs is considered as an honour and prestigious.

But as pointed out previously, women legislators are usually not given desirable committees. Although New Zealand's first woman MP, Elizabeth McCombs, served in the Accounts select committee, most of the early women MPs were allocated committees dealing with social welfare and children which men ignored, since they thought of those committees as dealing with 'women's issues'. Some National women MPs both from early and later decades refused to be stereotyped with women's issues. For instance, Esmé Tombleson refused to work in the social welfare committee. So did Colleen Dewe, Ruth Richardson and Marie Hasler. Richardson was determined to

avoid social welfare and health on caucus committees and accepted agriculture, economics and transport. She rejected being stereotyped as a feminist and believed that talented women can contribute across issues (McCallum, 1993, p. 161). Hasler sounded a warning by saying:

“Get in on everything everyone else is doing or else you’re not going to be able to compete. They’re going to say you’re only interested in a narrow range of issues. I think that’s always a danger with so-called women’s issues. You’ve got to be into foreign affairs, trade, all sorts of things, and then you’ll be considered a multi-faceted candidate” (quoted in Baysting et al., 1993, p. 144).

Marie Hasler succeeded in changing her membership from social policy and social welfare caucus committees to foreign affairs and overseas aid. There is no doubt that dealing with multiple issues is an indication of diversified knowledge. Similarly although women’s issues were always interesting to the feminist National MP Katherine O’Regan, she believed that to be a reasonably well rounded person with at least a little knowledge, one should opt for a wider range of interests and work experience (Baysting et al., 1993).

Thus, devoted feminist MP Marilyn Waring was appointed as chair of the powerful public expenditure select committee. Margaret Austin chaired education and science and Helen Clark chaired the foreign affairs select committees. Similarly, Working Women’s Charter promoter MP Sonja Davies was allocated foreign affairs and defence select committees (Davies, 1997, p. 126). Through select and caucus committee tasks, women MPs’ single-issue bias became less evident in New Zealand. Even 30 years back in 1971, when only four women were in the 36th parliament they served in non-traditional and diversified committees. Commerce, education, fishing industry, island affairs, library, Maori affairs, petition, and social services positions were allocated to women.⁵ Their diversified task preference is also reflected in the following table consisting of select committees of the 46th parliament (Table 5.1).

⁵ See the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1971, pp. 424-32.

Table 5.1. Women MPs in select committees of 46th parliament⁶

Select Committee	Women MPs served
Commerce	Stephanie Chadwick (Labour), Hon Ruth Dyson (Labour), Pansy Wong (National)
Education and Science	Liz Gordon (Alliance) (Chairperson), Donna Awatere Huata (ACT), Helen Duncan (Labour), Nanaia Mahuta (Labour), Hon Tariana Turia (Labour)
Employment and Accident Insurance Legislation	Sue Bradford (Greens), Helen Duncan (Labour), Winnie Laban (Labour)
Finance and Expenditure	Winnie Laban (Labour), Annabel Young (National)
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade	Rt Hon Jenny Shipley (National)
Government Administration	Dianne Yates (Labour) (Chairperson), Winnie Laban (Labour)
Health	Judy Keall (Labour) (Chairperson), Sue Kedgley (Greens) (Deputy Chairperson), Phillida Bunkle (Alliance), Stephanie Chadwick (Labour), Dr Lynda Scott (National)
Justice and Electoral Law and Order	Janet Mackey (Labour), Nanaia Mahuta (Labour), Janet Mackey (Labour) (Chairperson), Jill Pettis (Labour), Hon Judith Tizard (Labour), Georgina Beyer (Labour)
Local Government and Environment	Jeanette Fitzsimons (Greens) (Chairperson), Georgina Beyer (Labour), Ann Hartley (Labour), Hon Marie Hasler (National)
Maori Affairs	Georgina te Heuheu (National)
Privileges	Hon Margaret Wilson (Labour) (Chairperson), Sue Bradford (Greens), Hon Lianne Dalziel (Labour)
Regulations Review	Dianne Yates (Labour) (Deputy Chairperson), Ann Hartley (Labour), and Annabel Young (National)
Social Services	Sue Bradford (Greens), Helen Duncan (Labour), Liz Gordon (Alliance), Dr Muriel Newman (ACT), Jill Pettis (Labour), Katherine Rich (National), Anne Tolley (National)
Transport and Industrial Relations	Belinda Vernon (National) (Deputy Chairperson), Penny Webster (ACT), Dianne Yates (Labour)

Among the 13 committees of the 46th parliament, women chaired six, which seems significant in terms of their 30.8% representation. The varied chairperson positions enabled women to exert a wider influence on policies, and as chairpersons, they may be in a position to earn more respect than ordinary members. Women are placed in every committee except the officers of parliament, standing orders and primary production committees. A noteworthy difference between men and women however, appeared to be that both in foreign affairs, defence and trade and Maori affairs, committees were structured with only one woman MP. While placement in the Maori affairs committee did not raise any question before, foreign affairs and defence was a much discussed committee where women were not placed. Therefore, the current allocation in the 46TH parliament raises some questions about whether other women MPs are not interested or

⁶ See the Parliamentary Bulletin, 2002a, p. 13-14.

whether they are not given those committees, as in the past. There may be another possibility that potential chairperson candidates in these areas such as Tariana Turia, Helen Clark, Lianne Dalziel are already in cabinet. These members were known to have interests in Maori affairs and foreign affairs. Similarly, proportionately more women were placed in education and science, health and social services committees. Why is that? We intend to seek answers to these questions through our primary research in chapter six.

5.2.2 Position power through cabinet positions

Heads of state and cabinet ministers belong to the category of position power. Number is a prerequisite for power that leads to effectiveness. The former Labour Party President and current (1999-2002) MP and Attorney General Margaret Wilson (2001, p. 378) has supported this contention by stating that between 1933 and 1984 women were not in a position to exert political power as they were too few in the parliament. She asserted that women have begun to exercise political power and influence since the mid 1980s and this influence peaked under Labour in 1990 when women comprised 25% of the cabinet. Women MPs' power and influence are also visible in the 1999-2002 parliament because the cabinet consisted of 44% women members, which is above their proportion in the parliament and near parity with men (McLeay, 2001, p. 98). This supports what Phillips (1995) suggested as 'politics of presence', a desirable form of representation of women.

Placing women into 'soft' portfolios, such as children and welfare, while men have 'hard' ones, seems to be only a partial story. One particular event is noteworthy. In her 1984-87 tenure, Ann Hercus was allocated the portfolios of social welfare, police and women's affairs – a good combination of soft and hard portfolios. Today men and women take the same paths. The holding of diversified portfolios both by men and women is not confined to the 1999 cabinet but is a tradition in New Zealand. From 1946, when women first entered the cabinet, until 1999, during a total 19 government tenures, mostly men held 'softer portfolios'. Surprisingly enough, women have never held the education portfolio in New Zealand. While women have served in finance, police, immigration, transport, customs, labour, science and technology, they have never dominated the softer portfolios as posited by Reynolds and others. Thus far only

a few, that is, 18 women, served as full ministers during the 19 tenures⁷, therefore, their percentage compared to men ministers would not be a fair comparison. Four women held the health and social welfare portfolios and five women held women's affairs portfolios. From a more positive point of view it may be argued that men indirectly recognised women's expertise and for that the women's affairs ministry portfolio was allocated mostly to women. Overall, in New Zealand politics, from the start when women first held cabinet positions, with Mabel Howard in health, all appeared as powerful and influential and were not different from men. Softer or harder, whatever the critics say, one can exercise position power from any portfolio if one has what Handy (1976) described as 'personal power', rather than following the route indicated by the 'stepping-stones' theory. By placing the emphasis on personality and diversified knowledge, Handy's analysis seems more convincing than that of Reynolds for evaluating the power of cabinet ministers. The effectiveness of women cabinet ministers of New Zealand and their advancement to leadership positions will be explored more in the next chapter.

5.2.2.1 Local government as a stepping-stone

There appears to be another distinct feature in New Zealand politics. For women who choose a career in politics there are two paths, namely parliamentary politics and local body politics. Although we found less positive correlation between powerful portfolios and heads of state in New Zealand, experience in local government positions is found to be a more common stepping-stone for women to enter the parliament. Women appear more visible in Local Government and Health Boards than in parliament. Drage (1993) argued that a large number of women were involved in Health Boards as part of their caring roles, which follows Mill's proposition concerning their philanthropic bias. Drage (1993) and McLeay (1993) also found a positive correlation between less powerful institutions and the presence of more women because there is less competition to enter local government institutions. Regarding the large number of women in local government bodies in New Zealand, McLeay (1993, p. 48) posited that women are willing to put themselves forward for less powerful local bodies rather than the parliament because of their low self-esteem. Both the views of Drage and McLeay deserve attention.

⁷ Wood, 1996; Radio New Zealand, 1996; Taylor, 1999; The New Zealand Government Directory, 2001.

However, three MPs, Christine Fletcher, Fran Wilde and Jill White, resigned from the parliament to involve themselves in local government politics. Highly ambitious, these women later served as Mayors in Auckland, Wellington and Palmerston North city councils respectively. Mulgan (1997, p. 204) believed that a cause of women's local government involvement, is that it does not require living away from home. This may be a better explanation. This was true for at least MP Christine Fletcher who had suffered from guilt for ignoring family and children. By holding the Wellington Central seat it was not necessarily living away from home for Fran Wilde but she had difficulty in maintaining the commitment between her parliamentary and family life (Baysting et al., 1993). While critics like Drage and McLeay cited different kinds of explanation for women's local government involvement they may find it difficult to fit the case of powerful MPs Warren Cooper and John Banks's retirement from the parliament to stand for the Mayoral position. Overall, both men and women in New Zealand follow similar pathways of entering into leadership positions, as it is evident that a significant number of male MPs have also originated from a local government background. One rough calculation shows that in the 1999 parliament, at least 7.5% male and 8.3% female MPs had prior local government experience.⁸

Local government positions appear to be a promising stepping-stone in New Zealand as a large number of MPs have served a political apprenticeship in local government bodies. Not only MPs, some other prominent figures also belong to this group. For instance, Dame Catherine Tizard, the first woman Governor General, served as an Auckland City Councillor from 1971 until she was elected Auckland Mayor in 1983 (Tizard, 1986; Dwyer, 1993; Boon, 1996; Richardson, 2000). Both tutoring and her speciality in local body politics apparently helped to make her suitable for the top-most formal position in New Zealand.⁹ Similarly, the Alliance Deputy Leader, conservation and local government minister Sandra Lee began her career in local body politics and then moved into the parliamentary arena. Although McCallum (1993, p. viii) argued that since the 1950s a local government political background has been less common for New Zealand women, Table 5.1 shows that throughout the decades, many women MPs' careers have originated from local government positions.

⁸ See the Parliamentary web site 2002 at <http://www.ps.parliament.govt.nz/mps.htm>; The New Zealand Government Directory, 2001.

⁹ See Dwyer, 1993; Light, 1998.

Until 1999, 28.95% of women MPs had a background in local government politics. It can be argued that these women MPs' interest in national politics arose from their apprenticeship in local government politics, and this political experience helped them to enter the parliament eventually. Overall, it appears that entry to parliament for women is not confined to any particular set of stepping-stones, but local government experience is a distinct source of power and influence. The entire field of women's work experience helps them to be effective in parliament.

Table 5.2. Women MPs used local government positions as stepping-stones¹⁰

Serial No.	Name of the MP	Tenure as MP	Party Affiliation	Local Government Involvement
1	Elizabeth McCombs	1933-35	Labour	Christchurch City Council North Canterbury Hospital Board
2	Mary Dreaver	1941-43	Labour	Auckland City Council Auckland Hospital Board
3	Mary Grigg	1942-43	National	Ashburton High School Ashburton Hospital Board
4	Mabel Howard	1943-69	Labour	Christchurch City Council North Canterbury Hospital Board
5	Hilda Ross	1945-59	National	Hamilton Borough Council Waikato Hospital Board
6	Ethel McMillan	1953-75	Labour	Dunedin City Council Otago Hospital Board
7	Mary Batchelor	1972-87	Labour	Christchurch City Council
8	Katherine O'Regan	1984-99	National	Waipa County Council
9	Sonja Davies	1987-93	Labour	Nelson City Council
10	Jenny Shipley	1987-02	National	Malvern County Council
11	Margaret Moir	1990-93	National	Westland County and District Council, West Coast Regional Council
12	Joy McLauchlan	1990-99	National	Heretaunga Pinehaven District County Council
13	Judith Tizard	1990-	Labour	Auckland Regional Council
14	Sandra Lee	1993-02	Alliance	Auckland City Council
15	Jill White	1993-98	Labour	Palmerston North City Council Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council
16	Pansy Wong	1996-	National	Canterbury Regional Councillor
17	Helen Duncan	1998-	Labour	Auckland District Council
18	Georgina Beyer	1999-	Labour	Mayor of Carterton District
19	Stephanie Chadwick	1999-	Labour	Rotorua District Council
20	Ann Hartley	1999-	Labour	Birkenhead City Councillor Birkenhead Mayor North Shore City Mayor
21	Sue Kedgley	1999-	Green	Wellington City Council
22	Anne Tolley	1999-02	National	Napier City Council

¹⁰ See Dwyer, 1993; McCallum, 1993; Baysting et al., 1993; Wallace, 1993; Taylor, 1999; Parliamentary web site 2002 at <http://www.ps.parliament.govt.nz/mps.htm>; The New Zealand Government Directory, 2001.

5.2.3 Expert power through education and professional occupations

5.2.3.1 Education

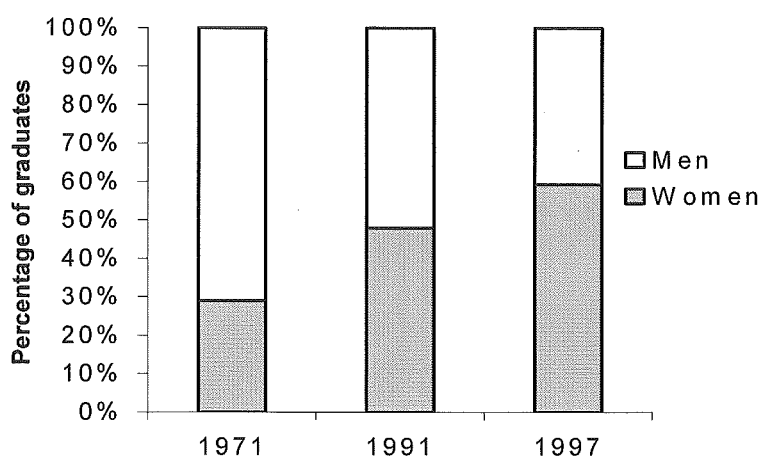
The status of women in the professions is a valuable indicator of their position in society. Education is the prerequisite for entering into a profession. Aitken (1980a, p. 12) claimed that New Zealand women's participation in education coupled with their experience in unionism and the quality of leadership they developed was probably the critical factor in their earlier achievement of political suffrage. Girls were eligible for free primary public education from 1877. In the 1870s and 1880s girl's secondary schools were founded at Otago, Auckland, Napier, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch and Invercargill. Following the USA and England, women were admitted to various university colleges and awarded degrees without serious difficulty during these periods. In the whole British Empire, New Zealand produced the first woman Bachelor of Arts and the first woman honours graduate. However, women faced severe criticisms for taking the same course curricula as men. The criticism came from Dr F. C. Batchelor, a specialist in women's diseases, when he made a public statement in 1909 that women's main responsibility was to raise a healthy and vigorous race. He emphasised women's education in domestic care and asserted that the education of men and women 'should absolutely diverge'.¹¹ The Plunket Society founder Dr Truby King, the Vice Chancellor of Otago University James Allen, directors of mental asylums, and male heads of girls' high schools, all strongly endorsed Batchelor's statement. Several newspapers such as the *Otago Daily Times*, *The Evening Star*, *The Dominion* and others favoured their views and praised them as 'fearless and authoritative' doctors (Olssen, 1980, p. 169). This however, did not go unchallenged. Dr Emily Siedeberg, the first woman graduate of Otago Medical School opposed the statement and later other professional women joined her in opposition. Despite all the criticisms, by 1914, slightly over one-third of the people who had graduated from Canterbury College were women (Hughes, 1980). Following that trend, there has been a gradual increase in women's position in education, and they outweigh men both in terms of university enrolment and bachelor degrees earned. Fifty-five percent (55%) of university students were female in 1998 (Gordon and Morton, 2001, p. 5). The latest 2001 census shows 19% of women aged 20-29 years had a degree or higher level qualification compared with 14% of men in this age group.¹² The trend of gap is evident from the figure 5.1.

¹¹ Quoted in Olssen, 1980, p. 167.

¹² See Statistics New Zealand 2002 web site www.stats.govt.nz under Census 2001.

Societal demographic change is also reflected in the parliament i.e., women MPs outweigh male MPs in educational qualifications. In 2001, among 37 women MPs, 67% held university degrees and out of 83 male MPs, 53% held university degrees.¹³ As we have noted earlier, educational qualifications are a source of power, New Zealand women MPs seem to have benefited positively from their qualifications. This may also indicate that women need more education to be considered qualified for positions in the workforce. Men are more likely to have non-degree trade qualifications.

Figure 5.1. Bachelor degrees held by men and women



Source: Compiled from Gordon and Morton, 2001, p. 4.

5.2.3.2 Professional occupations

In fact, professionalism is a characteristic of New Zealand women MPs that appeared early. In her study, Jeya Wilson (1983) found that New Zealand women MPs did not fit into the existing world categories rather they were a distinctive type with university degrees, professional backgrounds, and a distinctive political style and orientation which she designated 'professionals'. However, women had to struggle for this achievement. Although a promising start from the nineteenth century was observed in achieving educational qualifications, professional achievement was not that impressive for New Zealand women. Women faced extensive discrimination everywhere including unequal earnings, lack of services and unemployment in the labour market.¹⁴ There

¹³ See the Parliamentary web site 2002 at <http://www.ps.parliament.govt.nz/mps.htm>; The New Zealand Government Directory, 2001.

¹⁴ See Gillespie 1980, p. 101-10.

were no opportunities for women to enter the professions at the beginning of European settlement. The governesses with limited education and untrained nurses were not professionals. Although various kinds of visible and invisible hurdles existed to handicap women, by the end of the nineteenth century small numbers of women began to enter professions such as nursing and teaching. Entry into these fields was easier because they were viewed as an extension of women's traditional role of looking after other people. The Cult of Domesticity played a significant role in developing this kind of feminisation of occupations like teaching, secretarial work, nursing and other caring professions. Although these occupations protected women from direct male competition and women achieved some economic independence and social status, James and Saville-Smith (1994, p. 34) argued that these occupational stereotypes of women had a negative consequence, barring them from professional jobs.

In the late 1920s and throughout the depression, married women were frequently denied jobs. Their role was generally seen as secondary and family focused – ‘making ends meet’ (Page, 1996, p. 75) and therefore, the Unemployment Bill of 1930 made no provision for them. During the Second World War, a small number of women who were chiefly young, single, or married without children, were allowed to enter the paid workforce doing cleaning, packing, serving or office work in hospitals, shops and factories. A small minority of those working in the public service in railways and tramways found themselves in anomalous situations and were treated as temporary subordinates; their earnings were less than men. Due to labour shortages during the post war decades, married women entered into the workforce, but even in the same job women's pay rates were well below those of men. Career and ambition was not an acceptable feminine characteristic. Most of these women wanted to provide for their families. Although the Public Service Association (PSA) accepted the principle of equal pay for women in 1914, in fact it meant little in practice due to job classifications made by the Public Service Commission (PSC) that discriminated against women. Until 1960 discrimination against women in the public service was overt, even being ‘unconcealed, statutory, and very effective’ (Hughes, 1980, p. 132). Walter Hirsh, a young male teacher of the sixties, observed how women and Maori faced prejudice and discrimination, stating “I was paid more than my colleague in the next room simply because I was male. Men were believed to be superior to women, offering better long-term prospects for the profession” (Hirsh 1992, p. 117). However, this superiority was assumed to be connected with the male's breadwinning responsibilities. The

Arbitration Court at that time viewed men as the sole economic agents to support family and children and justified lower rates of pay for women with the same qualifications and same work (Nolan, 2000, p. 47).

Women however, were quite dissatisfied with the blatant discrimination of the PSC. The PSA women formed their first action committee and organised a campaign in 1943 demanding 'equal pay for equal work' (Page, 1996, p. 102). Despite overt hostility, a joint committee of the PSA and PSC agreed to equal pay in principle. Along with the PSA women, the NCW persistently lobbied the government. It was, however, nearly 20 years later before the Labour Party came into power and the Government Service Equal Pay Bill finally passed in 1960. The law helped careerist women to compete with men but women themselves were blamed for their own low expectations and ambitions and there was some truth in it.¹⁵ However, in 1970-71, the ideas for the second-wave of active feminism came from the United Kingdom and America and burst suddenly on New Zealand. Feminist activity intensified and women's groups began to meet during these years, circulating books, articles and ideas and adopting the name Women's Liberation.¹⁶ Their target was to improve the social and economic circumstances of women's lives where issues like equal pay, child care facilities and abortion law were significant. By the late 1970s due to the influence of several important changes in life style such as relative freedom in childbearing and prolonged child care, New Zealand women liberated themselves from the largely domestic, private world they had always occupied. They began to take advantage of these changes and became involved in the paid work force in increasing numbers (Aitken, 1980b, p. 210).

The 1970s second-wave revolution enhanced women's success in all sectors; Vowles (1993, p. 127) specifically found that women's increasing participation in politics had a positive correlation with their increasing involvement in the labour market. Women MPs began to appear with diversified professional backgrounds such as teacher, sociologist, lawyer and business owner. This finding may appear as inconsistent with the international findings that women MPs mostly appear from a teaching and community work background (Rosenthal, 1998). Overall 29.17% MPs of the 46th parliament have teaching backgrounds and surprisingly, 62.86% male MPs have teaching background outweighing the 37.14% women MPs with teaching backgrounds,

¹⁵ See Hughes 1980, p. 135.

¹⁶ See Macdonald, 1993, p. 161.

which is another exception in the occupational context of New Zealand MPs.¹⁷ In addition, unlike other Western democracies, lawyers or law degree holders do not dominate the parliament. Only 15% of men and women MPs belonged to this category.

5.2.4 Personal power

Handy's personal power is mostly equated with charisma, which is an effective source of power and influence when combined with position. Also we have suggested the exercise of personal power increases self-esteem and confidence. Unlike many other world leaders, irrespective of whether they were male or female, New Zealand leaders did not appear to be charismatic. But earlier during the discussion of position power we saw how they exerted power and influence from their respective positions. This special capability was not only limited to top women leaders but also most of the other women MPs appeared to be highly capable. According to Wilson (1983, p. 223) these women "have different perceptions and goals, but they have high self-esteem, displaying political efficacy and competence of a high calibre." Marilyn Waring was recognised by her colleagues as "one of the best political brains in parliament" (McCallum, 1993, p. 130). Even in raising women's issues, they appeared powerful and capable. And to do this they did not appear as aggressive but played a more stereotypical constant 'nagging' role. Marilyn Waring acknowledged Labour MPs Mary Batchelor, Whetu Tirikatane-Sullivan, Helen Clark and Fran Wilde as well as National's Katherine O'Regan as having the courage to introduce several Private Members' Bills that finally forced government to bring in its own Bills regarding domestic violence, abortion and adoption (Waring, 1994, p. 12).

Overall, a distinct feature of women MPs in New Zealand is that they are personally ambitious and competent. As individuals, their effectiveness does not seem to be less than their male counterparts. While in the past women were accused of lacking the necessary self-esteem and ambition, these accusations seem not to apply these days. Helen Clark is clear in this by saying, "I'm ambitious, yes. I wouldn't be in this job if I wasn't" (quoted in Myers, 1986, p. 175). She believed that along with Fran Wilde, her support for leader Bill Rowling during the leadership crisis in 1983 cost them positions in the 1984 Lange government cabinet. She however, retained her ambition even with the great disappointment of her non-selection (McCallum, 1993, p. 149). In fact, since

¹⁷ See the Parliamentary web site at <http://www.ps.parliament.govt.nz/mps.htm>; The New Zealand Government Directory, 2001.

the beginning of her parliamentary career, Helen Clark has been at the centre of both national and international predictions as a future prime minister (Haines, 1992; Coney, 1997; Henderson, 1999). Although it took more than a decade and a half (1981-1999) to fulfill her ambition, she did not give up hope. Margaret Shields, Annette King, Christine Fletcher and Ruth Richardson did not give up their ambition when they did not get the selection or lost the first time (McCallum, 1993). Some of them did not even compromise when they were not allocated their preferred portfolios. Esmé Tomblinson turned down the offer of the position of associate minister of social welfare and Ruth Richardson resigned after not getting the finance ministry for a second term.

We have previously identified family political background as one of the sources of personal power. Positive early childhood experience through particular political socialisation can empower an individual. Also we have argued that political socialisation is not confined to age; therefore, not only political parents influence children but wives can also be influenced by political husbands. Let us look at how New Zealand women MPs were influenced by their political families.

5.2.4.1 Personal power and family connections

Like many other countries, New Zealand's first women to be elected to parliament were chosen to stand in place of their husbands or fathers. McLeay (1993, p. 44) stated that although extra-parliamentary party involvement was a prerequisite for women, status recognition, one of the essential characteristics, came from family links in the first 45 years of women's parliamentary representation. However, from the seventies onward there is no longer any such recognisable thread and the replacement trend has diminished significantly so that 10.53%, a small percentage of women MPs compared to the past, originated from political families (Table 5.3).

However, it would not be fair to say that the earlier women MPs did not have any prior political connection at all or that later MPs had no family connections. The first woman MP Elizabeth McCombs, who replaced her deceased husband in 1933, began her career as a politician when she was elected to the Christchurch City Council in 1921. The same year she was also elected to the North Canterbury Hospital Board and in 1927 to the Christchurch Tramway Board (Dwyer, 1993, p. 22). She was not simply selected to fill the political vacuum left by her husband. Her selection was also continuation of her previous experience as a candidate. While her husband was alive, she stood for the first

time in 1928 and again in 1931. The first National woman MP Mary Grigg succeeded her husband but she was also highly active in the party organisation (Gustafson, 1986, p. 284). Mabel Howard and Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan both actively assisted their fathers' electorate work. Judith Tizard and Annabel Young grew up in families with a political environment and were involved in active politics of the Labour and National Parties respectively. Judith Tizard was recognised as 'a true daughter of the house' (Henderson, 1999, p. 52) because her great grandfather was a founding member of the Labour Party, her father was a Labour cabinet minister, her mother Dame Catherine Tizard was Auckland Mayor and became New Zealand's first woman Governor General in 1990.

Table 5.3. Women MPs' family connections¹⁸

Serial No.	Name of the MP	Tenure as MP	Party Affiliation	Family Connections
1	Elizabeth McCombs	1933-35	Labour	Husband was an MP
2	Mary Grigg	1942-43	National	Husband was an MP
3	Mabel Howard	1943-69	Labour	Father was an MP
4	Iriaka Ratana	1949-69	Labour	Husband was an MP
5	Ethel McMillan	1953-75	Labour	Husband was an MP
6	Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan	1967-96	Labour	Father was an MP
7	Judith Tizard	1990-	Labour	Father was an MP Mother was Governor General
8	Annabel Young	1997-02	National	Father was an MP

It seems, in addition to personal political capabilities and experience, a political family 'comfort zone' is an extra beneficial feature for MPs. However, the low number of women MPs having family political connections in contemporary New Zealand does not prove it is a source of power as in some other nations. Therefore, among Catt's (1997b, p. 150) three distinct aspects of political experience in New Zealand, in addition to coming from a politically conscious and active family, involvement in party and wider groups have merits. This supports the findings of Drage (1997, p. 45) who claimed that women in more developed societies are less dependent on family position than women in less developed societies. In addition, unlike the trend of the rest of the world, familial political culture in New Zealand women MPs has changed in a relatively brief period of time. The distinctiveness of a majority of prominent women politicians is that they have reached the top by climbing the party ladder. Thus they generally fall into the popularly known category 'insiders/climbers' rather than 'accidental leaders'.

¹⁸ See McCallum, 1993; Henderson, 1999; Parliamentary web site at <http://www.ps.parliament.govt.nz/mps.htm>.

The few women MPs who have come up through the power paths of ‘widow’s walk’, and ‘appendage syndrome’ have also been involved in party activities.

5.3 Sources of group power

Group or collective power is the most desirable form in politics as Parsons (1969) and Kirkpatrick (1974) suggested. We have examined individual power for the case of New Zealand. Through the following discussion on group power, we intend to examine the sub hypothesis that *‘group power is an important basis of an individual power.’* Again, previously we have identified women’s and feminists’ organisations/networks and reserved seats or quotas as significant sources of group power. In Wängnerud’s (2000) terms these are the most successful strategies for women in Nordic countries. But which one weighs more for the New Zealand case; system or strategy? We have found specific elements in chapter four that systems such as the gradual dynamism of culture and religious tolerance have specific contribution to women’s legislative participation and effectiveness in New Zealand. However, to weigh the merit of system versus strategy we need to address the sub hypothesis that *‘systems rather than strategies are the key to success behind women’s significant legislative representation in New Zealand’* let us examine the factors of women’s networks and movement in New Zealand.

5.3.1 Women’s/feminists’ organisations and networks

Looking at the origin of the women’s movement, before the emergence of organised political parties, the nineteenth century movement for women’s suffrage was highly organised. However, it would be unfair if we overlook the sources of the women’s movement. Although New Zealand women won the national vote first in world history, the women’s movement was not initiated here. In 1792 Mary Wollstonecraft’s sensational creation of the *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*¹⁹ inspired the early feminists in Britain and America. The democratic idealism of the early French Revolution helped the feminists to launch the equal rights movement. Middle class women began working in the 1860s for access to higher education and professional careers, property rights and the vote, and that influenced New Zealand women. Again, John Stuart Mill, philosopher and politician published a treatise in 1869 entitled *On the Subjection of Women*, which raised the issues of women’s suffrage in parliament and

¹⁹ Later, this book became the ‘New Zealand suffragists’ seminal document’ See Nicholls, 1996, p. 11.

equality of the sexes. This had a wide circulation in New Zealand and impacted immediately upon women.

In addition, Christian evangelism was widely revived in Britain and America in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries with the formation of the WCTU in Ohio in 1874 (Bunkle, 1980, p. 55). Targeting two main themes i.e., equal rights of women and the Christian reform of society, the WCTU started its missionary work. Although New Zealand women were influenced by the equal rights ideas of the WCTU they failed to organise any movement until a US missionary Mary Leavitt arrived in New Zealand in 1885. She was a travelling representative of the American based WCTU and inspired New Zealand women to form WCTU branches throughout the country. Leavitt received an extremely enthusiastic response everywhere with her message of spiritual transformation of the individual and moral transformation of society. By early 1886, 15 branches of the first national women's organisation in New Zealand were formed. In 1887, the WCTU set up a Franchise and Legislation Department, with Kate Sheppard as superintendent and thus the campaign to enfranchise New Zealand women started. In 1888, another women's organisation named the International Council of Women (ICW) formed in the USA and later expanded in Britain and Europe. With constant international pressure from the ICW and the local initiative of a group of leading feminists of New Zealand, Kate Sheppard formed the NCW, a branch of the ICW in 1896 (Macdonald, 1993; Nicholls, 1996; Page, 1996).

Before World War I, almost all publicly active women in New Zealand were members of the WCTU; the WCTU laid the basis for all women's organisations in New Zealand. Under Kate Sheppard's energetic direction, the campaign for the vote spread rapidly. Although the movement only lasted for seven years, by 1892 there was extensive popular organisation and agitation on the issue. By June 1893 a petition signed by nearly 32,000 women, the most successful task of the WCTU, resulted in the 1893 Franchise Act.²⁰ It is worth mentioning that New Zealand women started their movement decades later than the women of Britain and the USA, but once they began, their achievement was faster than the inspiring countries.²¹ New Zealand thus held a position of honour in the international sisterhood, being the only country in the world

²⁰ See Page, 1996, p. 9.

²¹ Both Britain and USA won the franchise after the First World War in 1918 and 1920 respectively. See Haines, 1992, p. 57.

where women voted in national elections. While Lipson (1948) credited progressive minded men more than the women's organisations for bringing about this outcome, Grimshaw (1987) challenged this by asserting that New Zealand women had not been handed the vote. Although Premier Richard Seddon was, all along, strongly against women's suffrage, when Sir John Hall rolled out all 300 yards of the suffrage petition with women's signatures, Seddon was not able to oppose it (Page, 1996, p. 9). He then created a complex plot to stop the bill at the Legislative Council with a few of his key supporters, but he failed and the bill passed by a slender majority of 20 to 18. Thus women's narrow win by only two votes demonstrated how vehemently their cause had been opposed and how energetically they had to press their case.

One of the ICW's main goals was to remove the obstacles to women's parliamentary candidatures, and following this the NCW in New Zealand was popularly known as the 'Women's Parliament' (Burgin, 1967, p. 105). Thus while the WCTU mobilised the women's suffrage movement, the NCW mobilised for women's parliamentary rights. Along with the Canterbury Women's Institute and the WCTU, it was active in sending copies of resolutions/reports to pressurise politicians. Once women received the right to stand as electoral candidates for parliament in 1919, the WCTU also prepared to nominate suitable women candidates for parliamentary elections. It organised again to remove the bar that remained against women entering the Legislative Council. Their successful lobbying prompted, and eventually had passed as legislation such matters as the appointment of women as Justices of the Peace in 1926, the appointment of Women Magistrates' associates and the provision of police officers without uniform in Children's Courts in 1927. Six members of the WCTU were appointed as the first women justices of the peace. Later the WCTU was closely related with the NCW and became known as an organisation that closely watched legislation before parliament. During 1967, the NCW represented about 230,000 women through its several affiliated organisations. It was successful on several occasions in converting its policies into Acts. Among them the rights of tenants of state houses to purchase them, homes for the care of the aged, the grading of teachers and the guardianship of illegitimate children. For the first time in the history of the NCW, in 1963 the government assisted with finance to enable the Dominion President to attend the conference of the International Council of Women in Washington. The relationship of the NCW with the government was further reinforced by membership of quasi-governmental agencies. For example, it has been represented on the Film Censorship Appeal Board, the National Housing

Council, the Immigration Advisory Council, the Maternity Service Committee of the Board of Health and on the Board of Health Advisory Committee for the Care of the Aged (Burgin, 1967).

To this day, many organisations that serve women's interests such as the Federation of University Women and the Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) are affiliated to the NCW (Nicholls, 1996; Page, 1996; Mulgan, 1997). The first woman MP, Elizabeth McCombs, was a supporter of the WCTU and later became President of the Christchurch branch (Dwyer, 1993, p. 22). The demands of the WCTU, NCW and the Labour Party formed her goals for serving women. Her electoral campaign was based on the reforms demanded by the NCW. During the by-election campaign women's vigorous support for McCombs compelled the government to prepare its own legislation regarding women's citizenship²² even before she entered the parliament. She described herself as a representative of all women throughout New Zealand and pursued the policies of the NCW within parliament. Among other women's organisations, SROW and the National Organisation for Women (NOW) are significant. Labour's Margaret Shields founded SROW in 1966 and it became a nation-wide organisation publishing valuable reports, doing research and providing programs in public speaking and self-motivation for women. The first New Zealand groups of the NOW were formed in 1972. These groups were active in the movement to eliminate discrimination against women in the law, the work place, education and family life. By the early 1980s most of the NOW groups had disbanded and by 1993 only the Christchurch and Marlborough branches survived.

Following Pakeha women, Maori women were also organised in the late nineteenth century with the establishment of the Maori parliament in 1892 by the political movement, *Te Kotahitanga*. Maori women asserted their political rights including their right to vote and to stand as candidates (Du Plessis and Higgins 1997, p. 330). Two women's groups, namely the Country Women's Institutes and the Maori Women's Welfare League, worked to bring Maori women into social interaction. The Country Women's Institutes became a creative agent seeking to increase abilities in the arts and

²² During the inter-war period, along with women's organisations overseas, the NCW developed a campaign for the citizenship of married women. The law was that when a woman married a foreigner and remained in the country of her birth, she forfeited her vote and pension rights. Thus many New Zealand women lost their New Zealand citizenship and were compelled to take their husband's nationality. The NCW and its affiliates ran their campaign through the 1930s. They had support from the Labour Party that came to power in 1935. See Macdonald, 1996, p. 90; Page, 1996, p. 69.

craft sphere and established a school for good housekeeping. Through the establishment of the Maori Women's Welfare League in 1951, Maori women achieved a powerful political voice and reached into every facet of life that affected Maori people such as education, health, social and spiritual welfare and politics (Blank, 1980, p. 40). More recently, the League has been involved with a range of different government departments to establish Maori self-determination, for instance the Maori policy unit *Te Ohu Whakaturu*, under the Ministry of Women's Affairs (Du Plessis and Higgins, 1997, p. 330). The first Maori woman MP Iriaka Ratana was a member of the Maori Women's Welfare League from its inception. Similarly, the second Maori woman MP Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan, with the backing of the Maori Women's Welfare League, worked to repeal the Abortion Law in 1978, despite a lack of support from the male Maori MPs (McCallum, 1993). To this day, the League appears as a strong voice for Maori women. The author observed the distribution of leaflets, nomination forms for the general election and various other information involving Maori women in public life at a carnival arranged by the Maori Women's Welfare League on 2nd June 2001 at the New Zealand Women's Studies Association Conference in Christchurch.

Due to the sudden burst of the second-wave of active feminism in 1970-71 in New Zealand, more women appeared as electoral candidates. Aitken (1980b, pp. 208-12) credited this to the strongly reawakened women's rights movement. By 1971 six of the larger centres had women's liberation groups and since 1973, four important national conferences on women's political activities have been held. In addition, in every national and regional conference, women's direct participation in the electoral process was an important part of the agenda. Familiar feminist organisations NOW and SROW were very active in campaigning for parliamentary women candidates during the 1975 and 1978 general elections. The well-reputed non-party organisation WEL was designed to increase feminist influence on policy by bringing more women into the parliament. Unlike its Australian counterparts, it even gave direct financial support to women candidates. However, as with other cultures, it is evident that women's family obligations and lack of experience in public life have proved a barrier to their political participation. McCallum (1993, p. x) pointed out that several women MPs have themselves stated that women lacked the motivation or confidence to enter national politics. Women's organisations therefore, came forward to train women for public life. WEL has been trying to raise the political, legal, educational and economic status of women. Their regular national and local newsletters contain the latest information

about women's advancement in different sectors. SROW teaches and trains women to be competent for public life. Some women's networks run free seminars and workshops to assist women to stand for local body elections.²³

Earlier we saw a problem that in different legislatures around the world, women have a tendency to address only domestic care issues. To overcome this stereotypically less powerful women's image, women's organisations started to train women in public life. New Zealand women's organisations have done so too, but in addition to other issues, they expect that women MPs will be addressing all women's issues. In reality however, although most of the women MPs were sympathetic to women's issues, some of them, mostly National women MPs, had quite an opposite view. For example, National MP Rona Stevenson earned a title of 'Auntie Tom of the Year'²⁴ from the Auckland Women's Liberation Group as she did not believe in equality of the sexes. Colleen Dewe regarded women's pressure groups such as WEL as nonsense whilst Ruth Richardson, and Marie Hasler opposed the formation of the Ministry of Women's Affairs. Ruth Richardson whose electoral campaigns were based on women's causes and who entered the parliament with her background in the WEL, did not specialise in serving women later on. The ideology of her opposition to women's causes was "women's agenda knows no bounds and must be dealt with in an integrated manner" (McCallum, 1993, p. 163). Feminists in general were not satisfied with this attitude as non-MP Sandra Coney (1997, p. 79), a devoted feminist, expressed her frustration, "Until recently, almost all the women elected to Parliament had had an active involvement in women's organisations before their election, or took an interest in women's issues after entering the House.....The new female politicians and managers cannot be relied on to do this. As women who believe they have made it in their own right, they often do not see gender as an issue." Also some women were not attracted to the National Party due to the negative attitude of National women towards women's causes.

Generally speaking, the majority of the New Zealand women MPs had an active involvement with female-intensive organisations. Among them, Aitken (1980b, p. 210)

²³ Massey University's New Zealand Centre for Women and Leadership ran free workshops for women who were interested to stand in 2001 local bodies elections. See the *Christchurch Star*, 17 August 2001, p. A5.

²⁴ See McCallum, 1993, p. 90.

specifically named the NCW, Women's Divisions of Federated Farmers (WDFF), the Maori Women's Welfare League and the New Zealand Plunket Society. Although 'Plunket' is a community organisation it is closely related with children and very hard to divide from women in New Zealand. Thus children's issues often come with women's issues. Again, Du Plessis and Higgins (1997, p. 330) claimed that throughout the late 1970s and 1980s women candidates for the New Zealand Labour Party have often had strong links with the women's movement. However, the above claim of women MPs' inclination towards women's organisations requires examination. Since between 1933 and 2002, a total of 76 women MPs have served in the parliament. The following table is an attempt to discover the connection of women MPs with women's/feminist organisations. The table also examines the party-based bias towards women's organisation and networks. This however, does not mean that these women were inclined to women-only networks, rather involvement with a women's network was one of the several contacts. Only the significant networks are mentioned in Table 5.4. It indicates that among the 76 women MPs, at least 56 i.e., 74%, had strong involvement in women's networks. Among the 37 Labour MPs, 31, i.e. 83.8%, had strong network connections and apparently, 6, i.e., 16.2%, had no connections.

Table 5.4. Women MPs' involvement in women's organisations and networks²⁵

Serial No.	Name of the MP	Tenure as MP	Party Affiliation	Women's/feminist Organisation Served
1	Elizabeth McCombs	1933-35	Labour	Feminist/WCTU
2	Catherine Stewart	1938-43	Labour	Women's Suffrage Political Union/NCW
3	Mary Dreaver	1941-43	Labour	NCW/Women's Political League/ Women's Land Service
4	Mary Grigg	1942-43	National	Plunket Society/Women's Land Service
5	Mabel Howard	1943-69	Labour	Women's War Service Auxiliary/Women's Active Service Club
6	Hilda Ross	1945-59	National	Women's Voluntary Auxiliary Corps/ Women's Patriotic Committee
7	Iriaka Ratana	1949-69	Labour	Maori Women's Welfare League
8	Ethel McMillan	1953-75	Labour	Plunket Society
9	Esmé Tomblason	1960-72	National	Women's Emergency Signalling Corps
10	Rona M. Stevenson	1963-72	National	YWCA/Women's Division of Federated Farmers
11	Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan	1967-96	Labour	Maori Women's Welfare League

²⁵ See Haines, 1992; McCallum, 1993; Baysting et al., 1993; Davies, 1993; Dwyer, 1993; Wallace, 1993; Rei, 1993; Waring, 1994; Henderson, 1999; Taylor, 1999; Parliamentary web site at <http://www.ps.parliament.govt.nz/mps.htm>.

12	Dorothy Jelichich	1972-75	Labour	Feminist/NCW/ Soroptimists
13	Mary Batchelor	1972-87	Labour	NCW
14	Marilyn Waring	1975-84	National	Feminist/WEL
15	Colleen Dewe	1975-78	National	Soroptimists
16	Ann Hercus	1978-87	Labour	Feminist/Playcentre Association/SROW
17	Helen Clark	1981-	Labour	Feminist
18	Ruth Richardson	1981-94	National	WEL
19	Margaret Shields	1981-90	Labour	SROW
20	Fran Wilde	1981-92	Labour	Feminist
21	Anne Collins	1984-90	Labour	Parents Centre and Playcentre Association
22	Judy Keall	1884-90, 1993-02	Labour	Federation of University Women/Playcentre Association
23	Annette King	1984-90, 1993-	Labour	Parent Teacher Groups
24	Katherine O'Regan	1984-99	National	Feminist/Plunket Society
25	Sonja Davies	1987-93	Labour	Childcare Association/Working Women's Council
26	Jenny Kirk	1987-90	Labour	NOW
27	Jenny Shipley	1987-02	National	Plunket Society/Playcentre Association
28	Elizabeth Tennet	1987-96	Labour	Female Clerical Workers' Union
29	Lianne Dalziel	1990-	Labour	Feminist
30	Gail McIntosh	1990-93	National	NCW /Soroptimists
31	Joy McLauchlan	1990-99	National	Playgroups
32	Margaret Moir	1990-93	National	Soroptimists/Plunket Society
33	Judith Tizard	1990-	Labour	Feminist
34	Ruth Dyson	1993-	Labour	Women's rights activist
35	Sandra Lee	1993-02	Alliance	Auckland Domestic Violence Centre
36	Jill Pettis	1993-	Labour	Women's Refuge
37	Jill White	1993-98	Labour	NCW
38	Dianne Yates	1993-	Labour	WEL/ Women's Refuge
39	Donna Awatere Huata	1996-	ACT	Auckland Women's Crisis Centre/Feminist
40	Rev. Ann Batten	1996-99	NZ First	NCW/Women's Resource Centre
41	Jenny Bloxham	1996-99	NZ First	NCW
42	Phillida Bunkle	1996-02	Alliance	Women's rights and health activist/Feminist
43	Pam Corkery	1996-99	Alliance	Feminist
44	Dr Liz Gordon	1996-02	Alliance	Women's Refuge/Feminist
45	Laila Harre	1996-02	Alliance	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom/
46	Marian Hobbs	1996-	Labour	Playcentre Association
47	Alamein Kopu	1996-99	Alliance	Prostitutes crisis centre, Sydney
48	Robyn McDonald	1996-99	NZ First	National Federation of Business and Professional Women
49	Tariana Turia	1996-	Labour	Member of evaluation team of first pilot cervical screening project for Maori women
50	Pansy Wong	1996-	National	NCW
51	Helen Duncan	1998-	Labour	Women's Resource Centre/Feminist Teachers Organisation
52	Sue Bradford	1999-	Green	Feminist

53	Ann Hartley	1999-	Labour	Women's Refuge
54	Sue Kedgley	1999-	Green	Feminist
55	Winnie Laban	1999-	Labour	Samoan Women's Project
56	Margaret Wilson	1999-	Labour	Auckland Women Lawyers' Association/Feminist

In contrast, among the 22 National MPs, 13 i.e., 59.1%, were found to be connected and 9, i.e., 40.9%, had no connection. Three ACT and one NZ First MP apparently had no connection with women's networks.

Macdonald (1993, p. 9) claimed that the appearance of equal opportunity programmes, women's officers and women's caucuses were the outcomes of more organised women's movements with particular goals inside the mainstream institutions between the 1980s and early 1990s. Along with their other²⁶ achievements, national recognition with the establishment of a Ministry of Women's Affairs in 1984 was significant. Thus the women's movement and networks are recognised as sources of political power and influence and in New Zealand both have played important roles in the struggle to achieve women's equal representation in politics. Although equality between men and women has not yet been achieved, society acknowledges women's networks' contribution and accepts women leaders and managers more readily than ever before (Macdonald, 1993). Some researchers even compared the development of women's networks in New Zealand politics with the traditional 'old boys network' (Hill and Roberts, 1990, p. 78). Women's own activities thus have a greater influence, which reminds us of the contribution of the strategy approach.

However, as mentioned earlier, involvement in women's organisations was only one of their choices. Women were also involved with other national organisations, for instance, the Federated Farmers of New Zealand. During the 1960s, MP Esmé Tombleson was a feature journalist in the NZ Farmer magazine (Burgin, 1967). So was Ruth Richardson. She served the Federated Farmers as a legal adviser. She later explained that "...I needed to gain a wider range of experience if I were to promote myself successfully to the conservative rural constituencies that were my most likely path to Parliament. Farmers did not in general relate well to bureaucrats. For this reason I left the Justice Department and became legal adviser to Federated Farmers.

²⁶ Instead of street politics, women's groups made submissions to parliamentary select committees. Also typical sexist language disappeared from job advertisements and the Anglican Church prayer book. See Macdonald, 1993.

This position enabled me to combine my love of politics with my love of the land” (Richardson, 1995, p. 20). Ann Hercus joined the Price Tribunal and Trade Practices Commission in the early 1970s which gave her experience in the economic and commercial spheres of political life (McCallum, 1993, p. 140).

There are several women MPs who did not come through women’s organisations, for instance Helen Clark. However, although she chose the Labour Party track, the ideas of the women’s movement were tremendously important to her (Myers, 1986, p. 154). Her fascination for women’s networks is reflected through her several interviews and writings and she has never appeared as unsympathetic as Mrs Gandhi and Mrs Thatcher were. She has happily declared herself a feminist (Henderson, 1999, p. 229). It appears that fascination for women’s networks are not a past thing but in addition to other affiliations, throughout the decades women showed their interest in women and children’s networks.

However, the prediction of a global pattern of women’s distinctiveness in issue preference that would make a difference in politics is no more convincing for New Zealand women than elsewhere. The stereotypical thinking and expectations that women would deal with only social welfare and family related matters and men would deal with economic issues has weakened in recent times. Levine and Roberts (1993, p. 151) stated that New Zealand’s political culture corresponds poorly to the portrait of women’s political orientations sketched decades ago. Rather women increasingly share in a broadly held perspective on the country’s politics. It seems the creation of women’s policy was a technique to ensure equality, to attract women voters, and to establish women’s issues in the mainstream of party policy because men usually have a tendency not to address and support women’s issues. Although women score considerably higher on the scale of these issues than men, “the gender difference is one of degree rather than one of kind” (Nevitte and Gibbins quoted in Miller, 1993, p. 65)²⁷. A similar study exclusively on New Zealand party delegates found evidence of an attitudinal gender gap. It showed that disagreement came from Labour Party women with their male counterparts on issues of gender equality, censorship, homosexuality and defence spending. On the other hand, National Party women showed little interest in the market liberal economic priorities which was endorsed by the party hierarchy.

²⁷ A cross-national survey of political elites in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United States and Britain supports research conducted by Nevitte and Gibbins. See Miller, 1993, p. 65.

Although the gender gap is evident on a wider range of issues including equal opportunities for women in the workforce, as well as pornography and censorship, this gap is not restricted to those so-called 'gender related' matters. Rather it includes a range of economic and social policies such as foreign aid, the question of whether inflation is a more important priority than unemployment, and levels of government spending on health, education and welfare. Except on the issues of pornography and censorship, the party delegates upheld the supremacy of party identity (Miller, 1993, pp. 76-7). MP Joy Mclauchlan however, stated that even with 'co-operation' on gender related matters like the pornography issue, women had diversified views on censorship (quoted in Baysting et al., 1993, p. 127).

Although both the Labour and National Parties have separate women's caucuses, New Zealand women MPs had, and still have, no bipartisan women-only forums. Party loyalty seems to be the dominant factor for New Zealand women MPs. During her early days in the parliament National MP Katherine O'Regan was very keen to form a group of parliamentary women but due to the philosophical differences between parties it did not work out. However, on a few occasions they did manage to work across party lines in areas such as contraception and abortion. National MP Marilyn Waring and her successor Katherine O'Regan as well as Ruth Richardson supported their Labour colleagues in these areas, but on broader economic issues Richardson was considered 'a lost cause' (Helen Clark quoted in Haines, 1992, p. 183). As the contributory superannuation system discriminated against women because of their broken work patterns, a move to resist this bill was organised by women MPs in 1997. It was mostly the senior women MPs of the Labour and National Parties who spoke against compulsory superannuation and called for the unity of women MPs across party lines. But the new crop of women MPs did not like this move. For instance, in a media interview, Marie Hasler termed this as a 'selfish, female' perspective that was 'divisive and self-centred' (Coney, 1997, p. 73). This was the only time when women legislators effectively defended women's interests in New Zealand as a bipartisan group. The only other occasion on which women from all parliamentary parties appear to have formed a unanimous committee occurred in late 1992, and was the Parliamentary Women's Joint Suffrage Committee to celebrate the centenary of New Zealand women's suffrage in 1993 (Davies, 1997, p. 148).

In New Zealand, parliamentary party caucuses are usually more powerful than the extra parliamentary party in policy making. Miller (1993) demonstrated how the fourth Labour government concealed their radical economic agenda from the party prior to the 1984 general election. Similarly, National's parliamentary caucus overturned the party's long standing support of American nuclear ship visits before the 1990 election. This trend is also evident in women's parliamentary caucuses. While the Labour Women's Council was powerful enough, their parliamentary caucus was more powerful as an institutional support for women's policy decisions. Opportunities for women to influence the political agenda started to come from increased parliamentary and cabinet representation rather than from active involvement in the party organisations. For example, Margaret Shields was president of the Labour Women's Council from 1974-75 and again 1977-78 but it was not until 1990 when she was the cabinet minister for Ministry of Women Affairs that her 10 points policy for women was endorsed by the party.

Although New Zealand women reached the critical mass by achieving 30% numerical representation they have yet to change the political culture of the parliament. Grey (1999) demonstrated this by analysing two women's issues, parental leave and child care. Rather than shaping the parliament into a more feminine environment, the masculine image is still the dominant scenario and women are integrated into this existing environment. Today it appears that New Zealand women MPs are considered neither 'single-issue legislators' nor 'legislators who avoid women's issues'; with only a few exceptions. They are ever conscious to broaden their areas of interest. Earlier, we found the term 'womanpower' to be comprised of effective, facilitating and non-aggressive components of power. Rajoppi (1993, p. 125) argued that 'womanpower' is a blend because powerful women have integrated typically female qualities of caring and nurturing with some male characteristics of straightforwardness and assertiveness. This pattern fits New Zealand women MPs. Without forming any forums across party lines, these multiple issue legislators seem to exercise 'womanpower'.

New Zealand women did not have the benefit of the quota policy as in Nordic countries. Women's networks are the only sources of their group power, which is enormously important. What is the origin of the legislators those exercise position and resource power in New Zealand politics these days? Almost all of the women ministers and MPs had active involvement in women's networks. Overall, 74% of women MPs had this

connection (Table 5.4). This finding tends to support the sub hypothesis that '*group power is an important basis of an individual power.*' However, more information dealing with this will be highlighted in chapter six. Another hypothesis, system versus strategy, is examined under the discussion of women's political activities along with their network movements.

5.4 Sources of institutional power

Among the institutional sources, the partisan nature of political parties and caucuses, trade union involvement and electoral systems appeared as possibly significant.

5.4.1 Party activities and partisan nature of New Zealand women

How do New Zealand women serve their parties? Can party representatives be women's representatives? How can women dissolve this conflict of interest? New Zealand women's political consciousness was tested through the suffrage movement and later through several women's organisations. The most powerful women politicians have had an active involvement in party politics. The following is an account of women's involvement in major political parties. It also highlights the partisan nature of women and women's trade union involvement.

At the inception of the Labour Party in 1916, the Party included 2 women in its executive body Elizabeth McCombs and Sarah Snow. They were re-elected at the first annual conference of the party in 1917. During the 1920s the involvement and prominence of women in the Labour Party reached an early peak. Formal women's sections in the party were constituted in the 1920s (Macdonald, 1993, p. 91). Initially, women in the Labour Party believed that their major contribution was to keep their menfolk well provided for by fundraising. Despite Labour women's aspirations to policy making within the party and parliament they were predominantly known as 'raffle ticket and cake stall sellers' (Wilson, 1992, p. 36). Since the foundation of the Labour Party, women have demanded decision-making power through their own organisational structure, such as women-only branches, conferences and policies. The existing male hierarchy challenged this demand and the relationship between women and the party was a continuous struggle. In the 1960s a group of Labour women started a campaign for the formation of a Labour Women's Council within the party. However, it was not formed until 1975. There was a tendency to ignore women's active role in the party other than their fund raising capacity. This was frustrating to many women

including Sonja Davies, who became a devoted Labour MP. She was fed up with Labour men who simply paid lip service to the ideology of the equality of women. In the 1972 Labour Party conference, Labour men were annoyed when she claimed that without women's support Labour would not go into the government and that women's roles should be highlighted through the conferences. The Women's Report used to be placed at the end of the agenda in Labour's Annual Conference. A revolt by women against this took place at the 1974 conference, when some women like Ethel Harris, Alice Vincent and Pam Nuttall exerted a lot of influence. Gradually, the Labour Party recognised women's role in politics in a more positive way and the position of a Women's Co-ordinator was established just after the 1974 conference (Davies, 1993). At the 1978 conference active women like Helen Clark, Ann Hercus, Margaret Shields and Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan played the central role in repealing the abortion law. Their floor campaigning was so strong that the popular MP David Lange, a candidate for the party executive, was defeated on the issue (Alley, 1980, p. 139).

The first ever woman President of the Labour Party, Margaret Wilson, supported women's separate branches. Before her appointment as party President, she worked mainly in the women's section. Her logic was that if women develop policy relevant to women then more women would support that policy and become involved with the party. This was tested in the 1984 election when Labour attracted more women voters than the National Party. Also 10 Labour women, a greater number of female Labour MPs than ever before, entered the parliament (Wilson, 1992, p. 47). The policy of pay equity came out of the Labour Women's Council as a result of work by Margaret Wilson. The Working Women's Charter of Sonja Davies was another great success of Labour women. In addition to these achievements, child care reorganisation and funding and Equal Employment Opportunity were outcomes of Labour's feminist members' pressure on male politicians. Overall, feminist activity within political parties and trade unions led to women's policy initiatives. Through the establishment of the Ministry of Women's Affairs by the Labour Party women were recognised as an interest group (Du Plessis and Higgins, 1997, p. 330).

But it was not only with women's concerns where Labour women were active. They also contributed to the general organisation of the Labour Party. The poor organisational structure of the party was believed to be the reason for Labour's defeat in 1975. As a result of this defeat, as a Labour Party National Executive member, Helen

Clark contributed to a lot of organisational restructuring. A fundraising division, specific roles formulation, and the positions of Education Officer and Women's Officer all were incorporated into the party structure. Clark was involved in the grassroots movement and started running seminars on policy and organisation (Myers, 1986, p. 157). Helen Clark's selection as the party's deputy leader and thus Deputy Prime Minister in 1989 was credited by many political critics as exemplifying the strength of the Labour Party women's movement and the desire of the party to extend its appeal to women (Hill and Roberts, 1990, p. 68). However, the Labour Party, which claims to be the champion of women's causes due to nominating women in safe seats, experienced another side of the story. During the women's liberation era in the 1980s, party selectors apparently tried to resist competent women. For instance, Fran Wilde and Helen Clark faced tremendous opposition during their selection from their local party membership in the early 1980s. In this, Fran Wilde stated that "a lot of political leaders find it difficult to deal with competent women who are politically at the upfront" (quoted in Baysting et al., 1993, p. 83).

The National Party was formed in 1936 and from its foundation women activists' contributions have been valued, although, initially their role largely appeared as 'ladies in the backroom', the 'tea-and-buns brigade' (Gustafson, 1986, p. 266). During its first fifty years the party relied heavily on its women workers who used to raise thousands of dollars through their luncheons, garden parties and dances. By 1938 an efficient women's section in every electorate in the Auckland Division was formed; at the time the Auckland Division had six women on its executive body. Dr Hilda Northcroft, who was a pioneer New Zealand woman in medicine, was elected Dominion Councillor. These women pressed the party for greater formal recognition of women and their direct representation at all levels of the party. Women were actively involved in canvassing new members, fundraising, organising social functions, and trying to increase political consciousness, knowledge and the confidence of women through discussions and study groups. A significant minority of women were a match for any man in organisational and speaking skills and political influence, and were prepared to compete with male members. In 1941, Nina Barrer, told the Wellington division that women must not be confined to the discussions of women's interests only but must widen their areas into basic subjects such as preferential voting, immigration and the incidence of taxation (Gustafson, 1986, p. 268).

However, regarding participation there appeared to be two opposing views. The traditional conservative women considered the women's section similar to their family and church and cared for one another during sickness and family affairs. They had no desire to become involved in policy making outside the areas of women's interests and did not wish to be part of the unpleasant, personality side of politics or stand as candidates.²⁸ The election of Mary Grigg and Hilda Ross to parliament in 1942 and 1946 respectively, indicated that some women were starting to move beyond their supportive role in the women's section (Gustafson, 1986, p. 269). This dichotomy between the women's sections and other women who chose to work as individuals in the general party organisation led to some tension. After 1960, an increasing minority of women in the party worked during the day or wanted to involve themselves on their merits in the wider political and organisational activities of the party but they became alienated from the women's sections.

The impact of second-wave feminism in the 1970s and the competitive nature between parties inspired the National Party to reorganise its party structure. A new post of female vice president with the same status as the five divisional vice presidents was created in 1974 (Burness, 1997, p. 217). This long awaited new post replaced the two token women vice presidents, one from the North Island and one from the South Island. The position was a very demanding one; the holder had total freedom to create her own roles and agenda and worked largely on her own. Initially many older women created considerable obstacles to its holders. They opined that the young holders of the position should be at home with their husbands and children instead of undertaking extensive tours. Since the creation of the post, very able, well educated, relatively young and independently minded women have held the position. Helen Carmichael, the first woman Vice President, served from 1974 to 1976.²⁹ During this period politically active women wanted equal participation in the party and rejected traditional fund raising activities through women's sections. Dorothy McNab, Deputy chairwoman (1976-79) of the Otago-Southland division emerged as one of the most competent and influential women. She was elected as the divisional chair for three consecutive terms, co-opted some capable young women to participate in policy discussion and fought to

²⁸ Mrs Bray, who was backed by the women's section and possessed the view that politics was 'a man's job', and replied 'who will look after my husband and son? It is bad enough being away three days at Dominion Council' - when approached to seek the parliamentary nomination. See Gustafson, 1986, p. 270.

²⁹ See Gustafson, 1986, p. 275.

raise the status and effectiveness of women's representation and organisation at the Dominion level (Gustafson, 1986, p. 274).

The party presented very comprehensive women's policies at the general elections of 1975 and 1978. They included the issues of liberalised divorce, equal pay, matrimonial property and the appointment of women to statutory bodies. Even Robert Muldoon who was criticised by the majority of women MPs for his sexist and discriminatory attitude towards women (Baysting, et al., 1993), praised his party women for their contribution. He emphasised the need for more women MPs. In 1982 although he fiercely opposed the choice of a woman president of the National Party, he apparently felt proud of the party's non-sexist move electing Sue Wood, as President.³⁰ Sue Wood, an authoritative voice not only on party affairs generally but on women's matters in particular, held the position of vice president from 1977 to 1982 and subsequently became the first ever woman President of the New Zealand National Party in 1982.

However, it is surprising that unlike Labour's Elizabeth McCombs none of the pioneer women from the National Party were able to enter the parliament. Even the party's first ever woman president, Sue Wood, failed to enter parliament. Due to a very small number of women MPs, the National Party could not form a women's caucus until 1990. McLeay (1993, p. 60) identified two reasons for National's tardiness. First, although some of the radical feminists like Marilyn Waring came from National, basically the party was less attractive to women activists' ideology. Second, candidate selection was entirely in the hands of local selectorates which made what McLeay called a 'tyranny of small decisions'. However, to encourage and attract more women to the National Party, prior to the 1990 election, MP Katherine O'Regan and MP Jenny Shipley ran a workshop named 'Women for National' (McCallum, 1993, p. 212). Women's advisory committee is one of the essential components of National's divisional committees. According to the 1997 Constitution and Rules of the National Party, the functions and powers of the committee are to advise the divisional conference, executives and council on matters relating to women, to encourage and assist women in co-operating in the work of the division and to liaise with the woman vice president. But key constitutional changes are underway from the year 2003 where

³⁰ Ibid, p. 276.

the primary roles of the women's advisory committee moved into the policy area.³¹ However, women's sections are still a matter of debate for both the National and Labour Parties. It is usually the older women who are interested in the women's section but younger women are more interested in the mainstream party. Both the Labour and National Parties have branches for specified categories of members such as women, Maori, and Pacific Islanders in the large cities. Otherwise, the normal types of branches are open to everyone (Mulgan, 1997, p. 250).

Aitken (1980a, p. 22-3) indicated that the National Party, which held the majority of seats in all but three post-war terms until 1980, proved very slow to acknowledge women candidates. The few women who offered themselves for selection frequently faced male chauvinism. For instance, a well-respected local figure like Hilda Ross faced opposition from many National Party men on her candidacy in 1945. In this, Hilda Ross's expression was that a woman getting into parliament "is like getting a camel through the eye of a needle" (quoted in Gustafson, 1986, p. 284). 'Lack of women candidates' was a common alibi of political parties, which was challenged by the WEL in 1983. The WEL wanted to prove that women put forward their names but the party did not select them (McCallum, 1993, p. 126). Not only did women face opposition in the parties but also there was a tendency to place women into unwinnable seats. Hill and Roberts (1990, p. 75) reported: "National has been more likely than Labour to use women as cannon-fodder in hopeless electorates." Ruth Richardson and Jenny Shipley worked very hard to convince party selectors to let them prove themselves worthy of long-held National seats. Later, Jenny Shipley herself confessed that there was a problem of putting women into safe seats, but she argued that this culture and attitude was changing (McCallum, 1993, p. 235). Any woman who stood for office faced sexist questions like "What if you get married?" "Do you want to have children?" "What about your husband?" "How does he feel?" (Waring, 1994, p. 20). This was experienced by Christine Fletcher when she sought her nomination firstly for Papakura. The first question asked by the delegates was "Oh Chrissie dear, who's going to take care of your family?" (quoted in Baysting et al., 1993, p. 18). On the second occasion when she sought nomination for Eden she answered arrogantly to the same question that it was none of their business.

³¹ For key constitutional changes of the New Zealand National Party see <http://national.org.nz>

Labour Party women took the opportunity to criticise the National Party's relatively more conservative and discriminatory attitude to nominating women. For instance, indicating Pauline Gardiner's failure to get the selection for National's 1990 East Cape seat, Labour MP Anne Collins wore a T-shirt saying "women can do anything except get National Party selection"³². Ironically, it is mostly National women MPs who did not believe in the existence of discrimination; MP Esmé Tombleson for example. Several times she denied experiencing any discrimination in selection but when her ambition for a particular cabinet portfolio failed to materialise she realised how hard it was to succeed as a woman.³³ All she wanted was the portfolio of Fishing but was given the portfolio of Associate Minister of Social Welfare instead and she turned down the offer. Marie Hasler, another National MP claimed that, "I've never really felt there were any obstacles because I was a woman. Once you start feeling that, you get rather defensive, you start putting up obstacles.....everyone is discriminated against in some way, including the guys" (quoted in Baysting et al., 1993, p. 142). However, during a conversation with a senior woman executive of the National Party, the author was informed that although women still bear the major burden of fund collection for the party, they are discriminated against in winning nominations. For the sake of upholding family values, the party selectors continued to ask sexist questions of the candidates, which is discrimination.³⁴ In the 46th parliament, the National Party has 23% women's representation in its parliamentary party. A party that produced New Zealand's first woman prime minister still has women underrepresented in its senior ranks and in parliament which seems ironic to many including Wood (2001, p. 250).

As identified earlier 'partisan' composition is one of the important sources of political power and influence, plenty of examples have found that the relationship between women and the Labour Party in New Zealand is something to be acknowledged. In fact, women's vigorous political activity started with Labour's emergence. Since its inception in 1916, the Labour Party realised the value of links with women's groups and Elizabeth McCombs was made a Housewives' Union delegate on the party executive in the same year. In 1918, the party adopted a policy of 'perfect equality between the sexes'³⁵ and gradually affiliated a number of women's organisations. These

³² See McCallum, 1993, p. 193.

³³ Many male MPs had similar frustrations, but Esmé Tombleson specifically named it as discrimination against her.

³⁴ The interviewee wanted to be anonymous.

³⁵ See Page, 1996, p. 53.

organisations later evolved into Women's Branches of the Labour Party. For instance, the Auckland Women's Political League affiliated with Labour in 1916 and two years later combined with the Women's International League to form a branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). They promoted issues like anti-militarism and the interests of working class women. By 1925, the organisation converted into the Auckland Women's Branch of the Labour Party and participated in Labour's first women's conference held in 1927. The WILPF still runs as an independent organisation but supports Labour Party's policy towards peace keeping.³⁶ Politically active women appealed to other women for their support. For example, through her pamphlet in 1928, Edna Macky asserted that "Woman's cause and Labour's cause are one and the same" (quoted in Macdonald, 1993, p. 91). Again in 1933, Elizabeth McCombs's pamphlet claimed that supporting Labour means supporting women's rights because equal guardianship rights, the endowment of motherhood and equal pay all were part of Labour's programme. She believed that the first woman MP in New Zealand should be a member of the Labour Party³⁷ and she also brought it about by establishing herself in New Zealand parliamentary history. Yet it was not only political participation, the Labour Party had a tendency to address women's issues in general. For instance, we have seen earlier how women's nationality rights and the pay equality of PSC were strongly supported by the Labour Party. During the 1970s prominent women from different women's movements joined the Labour Party, they encouraged other women to become candidates, as well as urged the party to select more women (McLeay, 2000, p. 212).

The Labour Party contained more successful women candidates than the National Party because the Labour Party started to place its few women candidates in winnable seats. From 1935 until 1975 five women were elected into safe seats for Labour but only one for National. From the viewpoint of developing women's policies, the two major parties Labour and National were categorised 'as the parties of initiative and resistance respectively' (Hill and Roberts, 1990, p. 77). For instance, the fourth Labour government announced its intention to establish a Ministry of Women's Affairs. National strongly opposed it. Even prior to its election win in 1990, the National Party threatened to abolish the ministry, but a feminist National MP, Katherine O'Regan,

³⁶ The author interviewed one of the WILPF executives on 8 June 2001.

³⁷ See McCallum, 1993, p. 7.

opposed this move. Again, the Employment Equity Bill was an outcome of pressure by Labour women after 1985. As Minister of Labour, Helen Clark worked tirelessly, and the bill passed in July 1990. Jenny Shipley was heavily criticised over National's first move in 1990 when it repealed the Employment Equity Act and the situation was described "as a slap in the face for women's equality in the workplace."³⁸ Coney (1997, p. 79) compared this situation with Jenny Shipley's 'lip service'. She claimed to be working on women's interests but implemented policies that severely damaged women. Even when women MPs made up about 30% of the parliament, the pay equity issue was still debated in 1998 during Jenny Shipley's prime ministership (Henderson, 1999, p. 60). During the second reading of Paid Parental Leave Bill in 1998 National's Jenny Shipley and Christine Fletcher opposed. Georgina te Heuheu vehemently opposed the policy of paid maternity leave. A similar scenario can be observed in more recent days. The National Party did not support the Labour-Alliance coalition government's Paid Parental Leave Bill. All these events support Devere and Scott (2001, p. 370) who asserted that due to National's anti-pathetic attitude feminists made few links with National and the party hindered women's interests on several occasions. The two parties' distinctive social differences were reflected in the parliamentary representation of Maori candidates. Maori were hardly ever selected for safe general seats until two of the National Party candidates were selected and elected in 1975. Labour monopolised the Maori seats, two of which were held by women (McLeay, 1980, p. 46). For the first time, a Maori female candidate, Georgina te Heuheu, and an Asian candidate, Pansy Wong, won list seats on National's ticket in 1996.

It appears that Labour women are much more successful than the National women in bringing women's issues both into the party and parliamentary arenas. However, the claim the Labour Party makes, that they work for women's causes does not appear to be always true. In many cases the Party representation and women's representation contradicted each other. For example, during the 1984 election the Labour Party developed a policy for women that covered all aspects of women lives such as economic, social, cultural and political. At the same time it developed a change to a market driven economic policy which contradicted the previous one. However, the women did not object to the policy for the sake of party unity which reminds us of the primary task of legislators as party representatives (Wilson, 1992).

³⁸ See McCallum, 1993, p. 233.

Thus far the contribution of the strategy approach has been assessed through women's network and women's party involvement. It seems the strategy approach, women's network in particular, both in and outside party structure has much more influence than the system approach in New Zealand. Again, it is almost the sole credit of the Labour women. But before disproving the sub hypothesis that *'systems rather than strategies are the key to success behind women's significant legislative representation in New Zealand'*, women legislators' own version need to examine in chapter six. In the previous chapter we found the element that *'political parties have a prejudice against nominating women as electoral candidates'* which is more evident from the discussion above. However, individual MPs' opinion is more useful to support this hypothesis. This follows in the next chapter.

5.4.1.1 Trade union involvement

Table 5.5. Women MPs with trade union experience³⁹

Serial No.	Name of the MP	Tenure as MP	Party Affiliation
1	Mary Dreaver	1941-43	Labour
2	Mabel Howard	1943-69	Labour
3	Dorothy Jelichich	1972-75	Labour
4	Mary Batchelor	1972-87	Labour
5	Sonja Davies	1987-93	Labour
6	Elizabeth Tennet	1987-96	Labour
7	Lianne Dalziel	1990-	Labour
8	Marie Hasler	1990-93, 1996-02	National
9	Jenny Bloxham	1996-99	NZ First
10	Laila Harre	1996-02	Alliance
11	Helen Duncan	1998-	Labour
12	Sue Bradford	1999-	Green
13	Winnie Laban	1999-	Labour
14	Margaret Wilson	1999-	Labour

The power offered by trade unions is similar to other pressure groups. Although trade unions are mainly a male bastion, women dominate core public services such as nursing and teaching, which have persistently high union density these days. About 57% of members of New Zealand unions that are affiliated to the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions are women (Street, 2001, p. 358). However, these active women's groups usually had no link with the National Party (Devere and Scott, 2001, p. 370). Therefore, women with a trade union background rarely joined the National Party. In contrast, trade unionism has proved an important apprenticeship for Labour women

³⁹ See McCallum, 1993; Baysting et al., 1993; Taylor, 1999; The New Zealand Government Directory, 2001; Parliamentary web site at <http://www.ps.parliament.govt.nz/mps.htm>.

since the inception of their parliamentary career, which is reflected in Table 5.5 (an exception was National MP Marie Hasler).

Three remarkable factors, the anti-nuclear movement, the Working Women's Charter and women's 10-point policy, also need to be counted in favour of Labour. In the early 1960s Mary Woodward became the National Secretary and Sonja Davies was appointed as Secretary of the Nelson branch of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). Their hard and meticulous work helped make it possible to collect a total of 80,238 signatures on the first petition seeking a nuclear-free zone, presented to parliament in 1963. This record number of signatures can only be compared with the 1893-franchise petition. The CND petition was hotly debated in the parliament and was known as a policy of the Labour Party (Davies, 1993, p. 131). After that, Labour's anti-nuclear policy was publicised in their election manifestos⁴⁰ and the party accepted that it was entirely in line with public opinion. At the end of 1975 when Muldoon's new National government welcomed the return of nuclear warships, small groups under Labour's umbrella gathered to protest their occasional presence in harbours. Thus the Labour Party has substantially benefited from its anti-nuclear stand. One of the important reasons that the New Zealand Fourth Labour government was elected in 1984 was its refusal to accept nuclear warships in New Zealand waters (Clark, 1987; Lange, 1990; Vowles, 1990). Labour, however, did not confine its anti-nuclear attitude to a single party policy. On 14 June 1987, the Labour government enacted legislation, which forbade the passage of any form of nuclear-armed warships in or through New Zealand territory and declared the country legally nuclear free (O'Grady, 1987, p. 7). There is a possibility that women's predilection for peace has attracted more women into the Labour Party. This assumption can be supported by at least one example. Although by 1983, a very wide cross-section of the population was involved in the anti-nuclear movement, women were particularly strongly involved with the movement during the visit of Australian pacifist Helen Caldicott in April 1983. In May, a women's march for nuclear disarmament held in Auckland attracted and mobilised up to 25,000 women (Clark, 1987, p. 17). Helen Clark had many close connections in the wider nuclear free movement and was recognised as a pillar of the left (Lange, 1990, P. 143) and awarded the annual Peace Prize of the Danish Peace Foundation in 1986 (WEL, 1993, p. 131). In general, New Zealand's anti-nuclear movement was highly supported by women

⁴⁰ See the Election Manifestos of New Zealand Labour Party (1963, 1978, 1981, 1984, 1990, 1993). All of these manifestos articulated nuclear free New Zealand and the Pacific as their party's policy.

(Macdonald, 1993, p. 209).

Another significant cause favouring Labour was the adoption of the Working Women's Charter by the Federation of Labour and the major unions in 1980. The Charter accommodated the basic principles of justice for women in the workplace, family and parental leave, vocational education and childcare (Macdonald, 1993, p. 206). The Labour Party's women's policy in 1990 also had a positive impact in attracting more women. Margaret Shields, the then Minister for Women's Affairs, formulated a 10-point policy for women, which was endorsed by the party in the same year. Targeting equality as the key objective, the 10 points included equality of incomes, funded family care, increased employment opportunities, access to healthcare, equality of educational opportunity, justice for women, adequate early childhood care, improved status for Maori women, improved participation in decision making and valuing unpaid work.⁴¹ Aitken (1980a, p. 27-8) stated that the political parties, which exhibited the strongest attraction for women as political candidates during the 1970s, were Labour and Values. They had specific policy preferences for regional and strong local development, increased community participation in public policy-making and the development of minority interests. Unlike the National Party, which emphasised the individual's interest, the Labour Party emphasised the primacy of the collective interest over that of the individual. Many women therefore, were inclined to the Labour Party because they started to believe that certain political action was the most effective way to bring about social change.

The impact of the contagion process was truly great on the two big parties of New Zealand. Women's active involvement in parties and competition between parties in selecting women as electoral candidates enhanced women's numbers in the New Zealand parliament. When one party put up a woman candidate in an electorate other parties tended to put up women against her (Yates, 1992; McLeay, 1993). The competition between the two big parties was not limited to the nomination process but was also reflected in the party hierarchy. Both the Labour and National Parties have had women presidents on a several occasions. Following Sue Wood's election as National Party president, the Labour Party elected Margaret Wilson as its first ever woman president in 1984 (Hill and Roberts, 1990, p. 68). Since its loss to Labour in

⁴¹ See the Women's Policy of New Zealand Labour Party, 1990.

1984, the National Party has moved to attract women voters and has endeavoured to attract more women to stand for party nomination. The politicians themselves acknowledged this fact of competition as Helen Clark asserted “Jenny Shipley would never have been elected leader of the National Party if they hadn’t been trying to square off against me” (quoted in Henderson, 1999, p. 255).

Women are actively involved in minor parties too. For instance, the Green Party and the Alliance believe in gender equality, both have significant numbers of active women workers, which is reflected in parliament. Unlike other countries, women’s political activities are not confined to the women’s sections. Helen Clark (1992, p. 7) asserted that women’s interests were advanced by women having clout in the major parties. She cited examples of legislation like autonomy for midwives, employment equity, the national cervical screening programme and the establishment of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs which, she claimed, would not have seen the light of day without women’s clout in the Labour Party. The 1999-2002 parliament had a total of 37 (30.8%) women members, among them, the Labour Party alone had 18 (48.64%) women members, which was double the number of National women MPs. Both McLeay (1993, p. 61) and Burness (1997, p. 216) offered credit to the New Zealand Labour Party for the steady rise of women MPs’ number in New Zealand because of the party’s feminist goals and women activists’ pressure.

Table 5.6. Party based seat allocation in the 1999-2002 parliament and women’s share⁴²

Name of the party	Total number of MPs	Number of women MPs	Percent of women MPs
Labour	49	18	36.70
National	39	9	23.07
Alliance	10	4	40.00
ACT	9	3	33.00
Green	7	3	42.80
NZ First	5	Nil	Nil
United NZ	1	Nil	Nil
Total	120	37	30.80

Table 5.6 indicates an interesting outcome: both the Green and Alliance Parties outweigh Labour in women’s representation. Although those two parties achieved near parity with their male counterparts, no party can claim absolute equality. The equality issue is also reflected through the candidate selection of different parties. In the 1999 general election, the percentage of women candidates in each party was Labour 43%,

⁴² Assembled from The New Zealand Electoral Compendium, 2000 of Electoral Commission.

the Greens 41%, Alliance, 38%, National, New Zealand First and ACT 20% (Wilson, 2001, p. 379). The ACT Party contains 33% women MPs. Although the party emphasised merit rather than gender, party officials tried to make it broadly representative of society. For instance, the 1999 party list had seven of the top twenty positions filled by women and three among the top nine who entered parliament were women. Reid (2001, p. 266) argued that to broaden its potential support base to the public and female voters in particular, the party made a deliberate move by developing a feminine slogan 'Good Government is Good Housekeeping'.

The New Zealand First Party has no women MPs in the 46th Parliament. With other ups and downs of the party, women including the elected MPs were treated badly. In the 1999 general election, the two sitting women MPs Jenny Bloxham and Robyn McDonald were placed far down the party list and had no hope of being elected. MP Deborah Morris, who resigned from NZ First, accused the party leader Winston Peters and other male members of sexism. She is quoted in Bain (1999, p. 1) as saying "Six men at the top of the list sends a very strong message to women voters: securing the interests of women MPs is not a priority for NZ First, but securing the interests of male MPs is." Both Jenny Shipley and Helen Clark condemned NZ First for its failure to recognise women's ability. National women's poor representation is also evident from the table.

During the interviews a number of Labour women MPs described how the contribution of Labour Women's Council and the attitudinal change of male MPs were the key to success of the Labour Party's significant women's representation. On the other hand, both male and female MPs were asked about discrimination against women candidates during the interviews but a majority of the male MPs and National Party women MPs denied that it took place. The findings of the interviews will be explored in the next chapter.

5.4.2 Electoral systems

As early as 1893, Kate Sheppard and other suffragists had called for a pure system of Proportional Representation to achieve their goals in terms of representation. The simple plurality, single-member constituency FPP electoral system provided a substantial barrier to women's parliamentary representation in New Zealand and many, including McLeay (1993) identified the electoral system as a structural barrier causing

the supply side problem of women candidates. A century after Kate Sheppard, the decision was taken to change the system from FPP to MMP, which was considered more representative. In a referendum in November 1993, by a vote of 54% to 46%, New Zealand abandoned the single-member-district election system and introduced MMP.⁴³

Earlier we posed a question whether MMP would be able to meet the Royal Commission's effective representation criteria for women, Maori and other ethnic communities. Although women were not equally represented in the parliament, the increase in the number of women MPs was a steady trend in New Zealand. It is worth noting that just before the introduction of the MMP electoral system, New Zealand was leading the world in women's parliamentary representation in FPP systems with an impressive 21.2%. Therefore, personally, some women politicians like Helen Clark did not welcome MMP because she believed the number of women would continue to increase regardless of electoral systems (Clark, 1992, p. 7). Major parties no doubt had a fear of losing their domination. However, afterwards, many New Zealand politicians were pleased to see the overall results of the first MMP election in 1996.⁴⁴ With the increase in the size of parliament from 99 to 120 members, this election brought 46 new MPs in the parliament (McLeay, 2000, p. 204). Globally, proportional representation is considered a facilitator for bringing more women into parliament and in New Zealand it opens up doors for the representation of small parties, ethnic communities and women. Women's representation increased from 21.2% to 29.2% in the first election under the MMP (Table 5.7). The following table reflects the fact that minority ethnic group representation increased substantially, which was another expectation of the Royal Commission. Significant numbers of Maori women both in parliament and cabinet is also evident.

Table 5.7. Women, Maori and ethnic communities' representation in the parliament (%)

Category	1993	1996	1999
Women	21.2	29.2	30.8
Maori	7.1	13.3	13.3
Pacific Islanders	1.0	2.5	2.5
Asian	0.0	0.8	0.8

Source: The Electoral Commission, 2000, p. 157 & 161.

⁴³ See the Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, 1993-96, vol. xxiv, p. 1-54 (E.9a).

⁴⁴ See reactions of individual MP such as Jenny Shipley, Rod Donald, Dianne Yates, 1998.

Under the MMP system parties place more women in the lists than the electorates. In 1996 election, almost three-quarters of the women MPs and over half of the Maori MPs who entered parliament were from the party lists (Catt, 1997a, p. 406). Similarly, in the 1999 general election, women won 23.9% seats from single member districts and 39.6% seats from the PR lists.⁴⁵ Does it indicate that supply side problems affect only constituency seats? Or is it the party selectors' discriminatory attitude towards women? This needs to be tested through our primary research. However, as long as the target is to increase representation, no problem appears with placing more women into list seats because MMP involves both electorate and list systems. It is rather too early to predict that MMP is not worthwhile.

5.5 Sources of structural power

Under this category we have identified two specific sources: type of government and socio-economic conditions of the nation. New Zealand is both a small, developed nation and a Western democracy. Let us look at New Zealand women MPs and how they have benefited through these two sources of power.

5.5.1 Democracy

As we have noted earlier, women in democratic regimes can exert more power and influence due to liberal attitudes, and New Zealand is no exception to this. Liberal democracy helped women to take part freely in parties, women's organisations, pressure groups and trade unions. Using all these resources, New Zealand women have managed to overcome the structural hurdles rather better than their sisters in other states, and the increase of women's number in the parliament has been a steady trend. While some overseas critics analysed New Zealand women's better parliamentary representation under FPP as an 'enigma' (Rule, 1987, p. 494), McLeay (1993) believed that New Zealand's centralised, unicameral, cabinet-dominated political culture might have contributed to this relative success and encouraged women to look to party, parliament and cabinet to change women's condition. The nature of the government (i.e., democracy for New Zealand) has enhanced women's participation in different organisations and increased their mobility in politics. However, comparison between a non-democratic and a democratic period is not possible for New Zealand because the

⁴⁵ See New Zealand Electoral Commission, 2000, p. 157.

country had a democratic regime all along. Thus, following our theoretical framework, democracy apparently played a facilitating role for New Zealand women's exercise of political power and influence.

5.5.2 Socio-economic condition

Since New Zealand is a developed country women have greater access to education, professional training and the paid labour force. Most of them have an independent income. Does individual wealth help in achieving political power? In many Third World countries, it worked that way. A particular country's economic situation did not debar some women leaders if personally they were from a wealthy background. Although monetary competition is not a big factor in New Zealand politics, many politicians including Margaret Wilson, the Attorney General, consider women's economic independence a prerequisite (Wilson, 2001, p. 380). Sue McKenzie, the Women's Vice President of the National Party, Christchurch, confirmed this. She acknowledged the fact that the party delivers a certain amount of money yearly, but as a high profile party executive, she spends more than that to fulfil her public relations duties and other communications. Unless she had a well-paid job and her own house, it would not be possible for her to run the party.⁴⁶

A decade ago, Gold and Webster, (1990, p. 75) identified the economy as the root cause of inequality by stating that "the ideal of equality is in conflict with the economic reality of inequality." We have already learned that New Zealand women are earners in one way or another, i.e., those who do not have paid jobs remain under the State's support. However, men and women's pay disparity is significant. This is demonstrated by Statistics New Zealand finding that in the year March 2001, the median income received by women was \$14,500 while the median income for men was \$24,900.⁴⁷ Overall, this pay disparity arises from women's short working hours to accommodate family responsibilities. Furthermore, female culture is not simply an aggregation of tasks undertaken in the home, it is a culture of economic dependency. Rather than paying a hired nanny, the Domestic Purposes Benefit (DPB) is given to mothers, which compelled many women to stay at home to look after children. This is an indication that the State reinforces women's dependency (Bunkle and Lynch, 1992; Easting,

⁴⁶ Sue McKenzie was interviewed at her Christchurch residence on 4 April 2001.

⁴⁷ See Statistics New Zealand 2002 web site www.stats.govt.nz under Census 2001.

1992). Some feminists did not hesitate to criticise the State as 'masculine' and 'patriarchal' due to this attitude (Du Plessis and Higgins, 1997, p. 328; Nolan, 2000, p. 13). Thus, women's dual roles create financial barriers and ultimately narrow their opportunities to enter politics (Liswood, 1999, p. 3). Even for those women holding some of the most influential positions, a report from Statistics New Zealand found that the gap at high-income levels was not closing and men were earning more than women. In fact, a small minority of women reach the top positions, i.e., 212,000 men earn more than \$46,000 per annum compared with 66,000 women (WEL, 1999, p. 5). Women MPs belong to this minority. Thus we can argue that there is a positive relationship between a better personal economic situation and political power as we saw earlier that most of the women MPs had a background of elite education, professional jobs and family wealth. Until now, only Alamein Kopu, the former Maori MP can be considered to have come from the lowest economic strata. She was on social security for ten years, along with her husband before entering parliament.

5.6 Summary and conclusion

Earlier we raised a question about the big gap of 26 years between the suffrage and parliamentary rights acts. Although New Zealand women pioneered the achievement of voting rights in the world, the unequal gender relationship continues to affect women's public life activities. Throughout from the suffrage right to parliamentary rights, the resistance to the participation of women was articulated largely on the grounds of their child bearing, child rearing and domestic responsibilities. Maori women faced stronger resistance in this respect. Once women achieved parliamentary rights, they faced traditional negative attitudes both from society and political parties. While society reminded women of their sole responsibility to family, political parties perpetuated negative cultural attitudes and were suspicious that voters might reject women. On this ground, women were discriminated against in getting nominated by party men. Despite negative cultural attitudes and sexism in party structures and parliament, New Zealand women, both Pakeha and Maori fought on. They took all the possible steps to increase their parliamentary representation that are found to be useful in our theoretical framework. They are highly successful in performing in cabinet and select committee positions. This partially accords with the hypothesis that *'women's effective legislative representation can be assessed according to their ability to exercise power through selective legislative tasks'*. Local government experience proved to be one of the possible stepping-stones for women to advance to the parliamentary career. Through

high educational qualifications and professional occupations these women branded as 'Professionals'. Family connections do not seem to be a major source of personal power. They were and still are highly active in party organisations, feminist and women's networks, professional organisations, local government bodies and trade unions. Formulating policies in favour of women was one of the direct benefits of the Labour Party to attract women. This encouraged other parties particularly the National Party to take similar initiatives. The competitive nature between parties in promoting women ultimately produced more women in the parliament. The MMP electoral system enhanced women's numerical representation a step further both in Pakeha and Maori fronts.

We have found the specific element that *'political parties have a prejudice against nominating women as electoral candidates' in New Zealand*. But what are the main reasons of increased women's representation in the New Zealand parliament under the FPP electoral system and without any affirmative action? The key success remained with the constant effort of Labour Party's women. It was a constant struggle for women to achieve this status. For example, the right to hold party women's conferences was continuously challenged and forbidden for a long period of time. But Labour women challenged the party leadership many times from within the organisational structure of the party because serving parties is their prime task. This involved lobbying, demonstrations, compromises, promises and all normal tactics used in any democratic system. At the same time they worked untiringly to convince their male colleagues on pay equity, child care reorganisation and funding and EEO. The endorsement of the Working Women's Charter by the Labour Party was another great success of Labour women. The 1974 Labour Party Conference endorsed the Labour Women's Council, without which Labour women's success would not have been possible. Through this Council women established two strategies: 1) to encourage women in decision making positions in the party and stand for parliament, and 2) to develop a 10 point policy for women that was accepted by the party as part of the manifesto (Wilson, 1992). These are examples that New Zealand women MPs feel a responsibility to represent women. But they were conscious that *'representing women only may limit women's ability to fulfil their other representative roles'*. Therefore, a rare strategy to convince party men was taken by them.

It is clear that both the major parties, Labour and National, resisted women from the angle of general societal prejudices. Therefore, barriers for New Zealand women were as high as elsewhere. The spectacular headway of women in the parliament is the sole contribution of skilled Labour women. They made the party attitude change through their persistent and consistent struggle within the party structure. The party could not ignore the strength of the talented leading women within the Labour movement. For example, Sonja Davies, Margaret Wilson, Margaret Shields, Fran Wilde, Ann Hercus, Helen Clark who sought to make a general contribution to the party and were at the same time concerned as women at the conferences to achieve the case for women. As they did not address any single issue the party could not dismiss their claim and within these parameters they sought to advance the case for the representation of women. Thus the Labour women MPs represent both their political party and women. This achievement of the New Zealand Labour Party women is very much on the same line as the strategy approach of Wängnerud (2000).

Party based women's parliamentary caucuses and policies for women in every party are indications of women MPs' biases towards women in the broader context, but their confinement to women's issues is a myth only. Without their unequal numerical representation they appeared as effective, influential and powerful. However, although New Zealand women pioneered suffrage, their eighth global position in parliamentary representation posed a question about their representation. The supply of women MPs in New Zealand is found to be affected by three sets of factors: 1. Money and time constraints, 2. Discrimination by political parties, 3. Lack of self-esteem and confidence. One additional factor also draws attention; that politics is not a popular profession in New Zealand. All these factors will be tested with our primary research findings in next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

ANALYSIS OF PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS/INEFFECTIVENESS OF WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN NEW ZEALAND

This chapter describes the outcomes of a survey of the opinions of both male and female MPs in New Zealand. It deals mainly with the primary research information gathered through survey questionnaires and personal interviews. The questionnaire was based on the secondary source findings gathered in chapters four and five which referred to the cause of women MPs' underrepresentation in the parliament, their strength/weakness, effectiveness/ineffectiveness, suitability/unsuitability in politics. Personal interviews with female MPs covered all of the above issues. However, male MPs' opinions are compiled first to see what they think about their female colleagues' effectiveness. Their effectiveness can be assessed through their representational work for party, nation, constituency and women. The indicators chosen to assess effectiveness are cabinet positions, select committee positions and performance, speaking ability and overall reputation. Along with main and sub hypotheses formulated in the first two chapters, this chapter aims to address four distinct queries where all the variables are considered:

- **How the female MPs are evaluated by their male colleagues; are they different from male MPs? Are they effective enough?**
- **What are the causes of women's underrepresentation in the New Zealand parliament?**
- **What are the barriers to participate and to achieve effective representation?**
- **What are the measures that helped women to break those barriers?**

6.1 Male MPs' opinion

Altogether 34 male MPs responded out of 40, not all of them responded to the questionnaires. Seven declined to fill out the questionnaires. Three of those declined because of party policy against responding to surveys; two did not mention any particular

reason and two cited time constraints. Five MPs did not respond to the questionnaires but sent brief opinions through personal letters. Twenty-two male MPs returned the duly filled out questionnaires. This 55% return figure is considered significant. However, although we cannot compile the personal opinions of the five MPs who responded by letters rather than answering the questionnaires, they can be considered separately as their letters contain significant views. The following is the outcome of how male MPs responded to the questionnaires. For clarity a sample questionnaire is attached in appendix 'A'. Instead of addressing every question separately, we intend to address the major theme of the questions and significant results out of the sample size 22.

Regarding women's representation 12/22, or 54% said women are moderately represented in the parliament. In each case for well represented and underrepresented, 5/22 or 23% of MPs responded. This indicates that a majority of male MPs do not consider New Zealand parliament's 30.8% representation of women as underrepresentation.

In response to the cause of women's underrepresentation in the parliament, 17/22 or 77% agreed with the proposition that women are less likely to present themselves as candidates, while 5/22 or 23% disagreed. 15/22 or 68% of male MPs agreed that women typically have more responsibilities for child rearing and 7/22 or 32% disagreed. Only 5/22 or 23% agreed that political parties are less likely to nominate women candidates while 14/22 or 64% disagreed and of these 3/22 or 14% strongly disagreed.

Question 3 deals with the performance and suitability of female MPs. 16/22 or 73% disagreed with the proposition that female MPs work harder than male MPs. Next highest disagreement came with the suggestion that female MPs have less experience, they are less suited to politics and they face discrimination. In all three cases 14/22 or 64% of male MPs disagreed.

Aggression, assertion and emotion are the theme of question 4. 6/22 or 27% agreed that women MPs are aggressive but 9/22 or 41% disagreed. 12/22 or 55% agreed that women MPs are assertive while only 3/22 or 14% disagreed on this issue. 5/22 or 23% considered women MPs as emotional. In contrast 9/22 or 41% disagreed with it. Similarly, 12/22 or 55% and 11/22 or 50% disagreed with the propositions that female MPs are naïve and

passive respectively. High agreement rates were found for the propositions that female MPs are dependable, effective, accountable, responsible and confident. For example, effectiveness got the highest rating at 15/22 or 68% agreement.

Questions 5 and 6 deal with women's different legislative priorities or issue preference. Opinion was equally divided on the proposition that: women MPs have different or similar legislative priorities than male MPs. But in particular on the question of female MPs concentrating on women and children's issues, 9/22 or 41% found that women MPs mainly raise and focus on these issues. However, 12/22 or 55% did not agree with this.

Select committee placement is the theme of questions 7 and 8. In response to the question that more women are placed in social welfare committees, 12/22 or 55% i.e., the highest percentage, agreed with the proposition that women are more likely to have expertise in these areas. 11/22 or 50% agreed that the caucus is more likely to impose these issues on female MPs. On the question of whether women are stereotyped with certain issues, 1/22 or 5% strongly agreed, 7/22 or 32% agreed and 12/22 or 55% disagreed. As to placing fewer women in defence, foreign affairs and finance select committees, 10/22 or 45% agreed that female MPs have less expertise in these areas and more experience in other areas. Only 2/22 or 9% agreed that male MPs get preference in these committees while 13/22 or 59% disagreed. Only 3/22 or 14% agreed with the suggestion that women are less experienced in other areas, while 12/22 or 55% disagreed.

In question 9, regarding the necessity of aggressiveness, 3/22 or 14% agreed with each one of the following three propositions that (i) aggressiveness is essential in politics, (ii) it is not usually necessary in politics and (iii) it is detrimental in politics. However, the highest percentage i.e., 13/22 or 58% supported the view that sometimes aggressiveness is necessary in politics.

Female MPs' ambition is compared with male MPs in question 10. In response to the suggestion that female MPs are more ambitious than male MPs, 6/22 or 27% agreed. The highest percentage i.e., 15/22 or 68% supported the proposition that female MPs are as ambitious as male MPs. Only 1/22 or 5% agreed that female MPs are less ambitious than male MPs.

Regarding question 11 concerning the main barrier for achieving equality between men and women in New Zealand, a blend of reaction is found. Historical prejudice, sexism, negative attitudes, imposition of extra home burdens, pay equity, glass ceilings in corporations, different standards and different socialisation processes for men and women, media bias, and inadequate child care facilities are a few of them. However, 5/22 or 23% of male MPs have reached consensus on one issue, that there is no barrier in the society for women and women need to make themselves available for powerful positions.

Question 12 asked how male MPs rated their female colleagues. Multifarious views came out, all of them are very positive except one. The negative comment is as follows:

Disappointing. Too often they try to smooth over or defer decisions or avoid conflict when it should be dealt with to move on.

Following are examples of the positive comments:

Very strong; very effective; good quality; very good; good; fine; above average; at least as good as men; the majority are competent and committed; a good cross section of New Zealand society.

However, 6/22 or 27% of male MPs responded that they do not see any difference in men and women as MPs and commented that gender is not an issue in evaluating performance.

Similar opinions came from the 5 male MPs who responded through personal letters. All claimed that women MPs are individuals, not groups. Like male MPs, some women MPs are very effective some are not. The variations of character have nothing to do with gender and the way women work is not necessarily a reflection on their sex. These 5 MPs did not want to generalise women as a different category.¹

Among the two personal interviewees, Jonathan Hunt, the Speaker of the House is a veteran MP with vast experience. He has worked with almost all women MPs except the first 5. About women's underrepresentation in the parliament, his comment is:

¹ A letter from MP and Deputy Prime Minister Jim Anderton, dated 29 October 2001 can be quoted, 'While the situation has improved significantly in the last decade, I would certainly agree that women are still underrepresented in parliament. But beyond that I have to say that as with any other group, women differ as individuals and so I would not like to categorise all women members as a group...'

It has always been harder for women to advance in politics than men in NZ because there has been the prejudice which you still see in a lot of countries in the East, ... But in New Zealand, while it is changed enormously and now there is very much less prejudice, it still is slightly harder, I think, for a woman to advance than a man.

His response to discrimination by political parties:

No longer in the Labour Party and no longer in the Alliance Party or the Greens, but I think, still there is a bit of prejudice in National, but you would have to ask them that, but there is much less than it used to be.

However, regarding women's unwillingness to come forward, the supply side problem, he mentioned that lots of women with young families do not want to come into parliament until their children are grown up. To overcome this barrier, quite a few women chose not to have families.

He strongly disagreed with the proposition that women are not aggressive enough and not suitable for politics due to their emotional nature. He replied "when it is said that women are not suitable for politics because of emotion, it is a sexist comment, that's silly, and that's just sexist."

Regarding the stereotypical issue preferences of women he said:

...some men have particular interests, some women have particular interests. I think you'll find that women by and large do take greater interest in legislation to deal with children, than men do, but that's probably because most of them have had children, or have had association with children.

He finds it as a problem that women MPs have a tendency to work for social welfare type select committees:

I think that's a problem we've got for the future. While there will always be more women interested in social welfare, because as I said before, women are interested in the welfare of children more than men are. I hope that's something that will change and I hope that women do take a greater interest in such areas as foreign affairs.

His overall impression about female MPs is:

They are no different from men. There are some very good ones, there are some good ones, and there are some not so good ones. They haven't said very much and they haven't had very many ideas. I think most MPs, nearly every MP, whether man or woman comes into parliament with a certain amount of skill, but there are some who are destined to be cabinet ministers and there are some who are not.

The Speaker is hopeful to see the fulfilment of the Labour Party's 50% target of women's representation in the parliament. About the equality issue he said:

All I've observed that in the many years that I've been here, women have been doing increasingly better in parliament ... Equality is still some way off, in terms of numbers.

Another experienced MP, ACT Party Leader; Richard Prebble was interviewed personally. About women's underrepresentation in the parliament he pointed out women's child caring responsibility:

Most practical one is women as being the principal child care parent and to be an MP with young children is a formidable obstacle, not without difficulty for men and how women who have young children manage it is a matter of some incredulity to me, even now.

Richard Prebble, who has been seen as an emotional MP throughout his parliamentary career, responded about women's emotionality and aggression:

An ability to be emotional is actually a very great plus in politics. If you're a complete cold fish and a calculator, those sorts of candidates tend not to get elected ... The aggression that's shown in politics actually, if you analyse it, is verbal aggression. My experience is women are more verbally aggressive than men. There is a very good reason for that. If men said to me things that women say to politicians, I'd hit them, but you never hit a woman. So, in my experience in politics, the hardest things that have been said to me in politics have been said to me by women.

Regarding the common complaint about women's stereotypical issue preference, Mr Prebble's response:

There is a certain amount of stereotyping that occurs, which is across gender, so you get a little bit of bias of women taking that, for example, you could argue that, it's interesting to note that our education spokesman is a woman, and our welfare spokesman is a woman, and our finance spokesman is a man so you might say that well, that was stereotyping, but then on the other hand our communications spokesman, our technology spokesman is a woman, and our health spokesman is a man. So it actually reflects the

interests of the members and in both the cases of welfare and education, the two women respectively requested it.

Women's competency and effectiveness are highly regarded by Mr Prebble:

The women MPs are every bit as competent as the men. In many respects Donna Awatere Huata is one of our most outstanding MPs. She's probably our best speaker when she puts her mind to it and is intellectually very, very competent. She's certainly brighter than I am ... I think that the proportion of women entering politics will probably continue to rise. Because it's a job, in which women probably have some very real advantages. For one, it's a job where speaking ability, and getting on with people is a huge advantage and most studies show that women speak better than men, that they have more empathy. They're all very useful characteristics in politics.

In summary, that women are less likely to offer themselves as electoral candidates tops the score as the main cause of women's underrepresentation in the New Zealand parliament. Although a reasonable number of MPs acknowledged that women's responsibility towards family and children is a significant barrier, discrimination by political parties did not get notable support. Supply side problems, which was a major research question in our previous chapters, thus fulfils part of our query from this primary research. Regarding issue preference and issue involvement, a majority did not agree that women MPs focus only on women's issues but agreed that more women are placed in social welfare committees because they are more likely to have expertise in these areas. None of the male MPs expressed doubts but all of them spoke very highly about women MPs' effectiveness, accountability and responsibility. They did not even notice any difference along gender lines. However, both the Speaker and the ACT Leader indicated women MPs' tendency to work on social welfare committees is still a problem and identified a slight inclination to stereotypical issue bias. Both of them indicated that male MPs have certain interests too and thus a trace of stereotypes are evident both in male and female MPs. It may be the case for New Zealand MPs that some of them focus on some specific issues while other work more generally. The specialist and generalist both the qualities are accepted in legislatures. Women MPs' slight inclination towards certain issues does not mean that they are ghettoised with those issues only. They work for the political party, nation, constituency and in addition they address women's issues. But we intend to compare these overall findings with female MPs' opinions.

6.2 Personal interviews of female MPs

Altogether 21 MPs from the 46th parliament, plus 1 former female MP, were interviewed. A good cross section of women MPs from all parties attended interviews. For instance, 9 out of 18 Labour, 6 out of 9 National, 2 out of 4 Alliance, 2 out of 3 Greens and 2 out of 3 ACT MPs took part. Only one MP asked for complete anonymity.

The first question asked was about the cause of women's underrepresentation in the parliament and invariably everyone pointed out women's responsibility to family and young children as the main cause. Jenny Shipley's dilemma in accepting nomination, Katherine O'Regan's unwillingness to accept her first nomination, Elizabeth Tennet's decision not to have another baby, all are indications of women's responsibility to children and home. Although, following the equalitarian view parents are expected to share equal household responsibilities, women bear the major burdens. We learned earlier that 60% of men's work is paid while 70% of women's work is unpaid. This unpaid work involves children and home responsibilities. Therefore, for a young mother it is always hard to cope with the parliamentary career. According to the National MP Belinda Vernon:

It's very difficult for any family person and while the traditional role of the mother being primary care giver is changing in New Zealand and we are getting much more equal sharing of parental responsibilities. I think for a mother with young children to tackle parliament is a real challenge and while some have done it very successfully I think it is something that would put lot of women off. They will think I will wait till my children are older or I won't have children, which many women in parliament have chosen not to do.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, throughout the history of New Zealand only 4 women entered parliament at their childbearing age. Labour Minister Lianne Dalziel is one of them who chose not to have children to advance her political career. Her view:

Having children and doing politics is very difficult and there have only been 4 women in the history of parliament who have given birth to children while they have been MPs. I have made a decision not to have children because I don't believe that I could do that balancing between politics which I think a very consuming career and motherhood which is also very consuming career.

Sexist beliefs of women's need for children are not a major inhibiting factor these days. Despite Jenny Shipley's frequent attacks on Helen Clark's childless status, Clark's

popularity increased and by June-July, 2001 she was more than 20% ahead of Shipley (Barkham, 2001, p. 21). Also, a number of women in the 1999-2002 parliament were unmarried, and/or childless. Not only have women become more capable of handling criticism, it is observed from Davey's (1998, p. 237) study that over time de facto relationships appear as more popular than formal marriage, and divorce is gaining greater social acceptability.

It is observed that most of the women who have children waited until their children are grown up. In the 46th parliament, the youngest female MP is 31 and the oldest female MP is 60 years of age. The majority are in their 50s. Women's family responsibility appears to be a problem in achieving numerical representation; but it can also affect women's exercise of power when they enter the parliament in their later life. This is an indication that barriers to participation can also be barriers to effectiveness. Green party Co-leader Jeanette Fitzsimmons asserted that:

I would not do this job if I had young children, I absolutely wouldn't do it. That means that you come to it later in life than men do, and [that] there may be less opportunity perhaps to reach high positions of influence because of that, because you start later. It is extremely destructive for home and family life. Particularly when you live a long long way from Wellington and you have got to travel and leave your family every week.

It is often thought that providing childcare is the solution to this problem. But parliament is not a separate domain, it reflects the structure of the whole society. Labour MP Dianne Yates pointed out the cultural and attitudinal barriers where the problems are deeply rooted:

Structurally in many ways we have made changes so that there are not as many structural barriers as there were. There are a lot of cultural barriers and attitudinal barriers. In terms of family structure, in terms of income earning, women still find it difficult to take part in public life. And women still have to do 2 or 3 roles, they have to do their job, they will probably bear 90% of the child caring and housework and all of the other routine things. So although we may have more women particularly in politics, younger women with families find it very difficult. Unless you have got a very high income and can afford 24 hours baby sitting you often can't actually come to Wellington 3 days a week. Even those who have a job in the paid workforce find that childcare is a problem because families are still structured in a way that the mother has the greatest responsibility. And even where you say men are having greater responsibility there was some research that showed that men did 11 minutes per week more house work than they did 10 years ago. Well, 11 minutes might be the dishes once a week, it's not a lot of difference ... Some men are taking more responsibility but it is nowhere near 50-50.

To what extent do cultural and religious barriers impact on women's political effectiveness? A few recognised that an element of patriarchal culture could be a reason for women's underrepresentation in the parliament. However, they pointed out that the culture is changing. Unlike Nordic countries' static egalitarian culture, New Zealand women have been benefited through the gradual cultural change. Thus the system approach has made a specific contribution in Wängnerud's terms. But how has it happened? Green Party MP Sue Kedgley put it:

Right until the 1970s we were ... our society was so entrenched into patriarchal culture, the whole role revolved around men and women's role is to basically to look after men and to live their lives through men and to gain their identity through men and we did not have it in our own right. We have been challenging that through the women's movement but it all takes time to change the fundamental culture, change of attitudes, values, it does not happen over-night.

However, women MPs such as Jeannette Fitzsimmons, Marian Hobbs, Steve Chadwick, Dr Lynda Scott, Dr Liz Gordon denied the influence of patriarchal culture where women remain under men's control. While there is unanimous agreement that women are primarily responsible for childcare, they did not acknowledge the phrase the 'Cult of Domesticity' for women's underrepresentation. ACT MP Penny Webster asserted:

My own feeling is that because in New Zealand, women have had the vote for a long time, and have been treated, although they may not think so, if you compare New Zealand to other cultures, New Zealand women are treated as equals, and have been right through the late 50s, 60s, 70s. Although they might argue against that, women do not put themselves forward politically. I do not go along with the patriarchal thing at all.

Unlike other countries, New Zealand women have not faced insurmountable religious barriers. Also they have found it easier to leave churches. McCallum (1993) stated that some of the women MPs were regular churchgoers. For example, Marilyn Waring used to go to St Peter's Anglican Church in Wellington for the music until she was 22 i.e., before her entry to the parliament. Ruth Richardson was educated in a Catholic girls' college and challenged its oppressive rules towards women. This led her to give up Catholicism in 1974 when she was helping to establish the WEL. Similarly, Fran Wilde dropped out from St Mary's Catholic College due to her constant questioning of the strict rules of Catholicism. Referring to the Catholic Church, Margaret Wilson stated "I later left the church because of its views on women's role and sex" (quoted in Mediawomen, 1984, p.

122). However, it is worth noting that religion was not a barrier for Rev. Ann Batten, an Anglican priest, who became an MP in 1996. Although socialisation and traditional views portray women's stereotypical image, overall, since the suffrage movement religion does not appear to have been an important direct constraining factor for New Zealand women.

Cultural dynamism has not only evident in the mainstream Pakeha women but significant changes have appeared in regard to Maori women. In fact, their hurdles were greater in the past. Compared to those days, their significant number in the parliament and cabinet signifies positive development in the aspect of cultural barriers. Religion and patriarchy may not be as dominant in New Zealand society as in other countries of the Pacific Rim but a particular cultural influence should not be denied. Also, not all women have problems of family and children, yet women who are not domestic, still do not come forward. When we examined why women do not put themselves forward, women's lack of interest in a parliamentary career appeared as a major problem to many women MPs:

Women overall are not as interested in being in national politics as men. And there is not a pool of them available. Although MMP has been a device for putting more women in through the list, the pool of women are not putting themselves up for candidacy, I don't think it has got any bigger, it is not growing in my opinion ... I just think this life does not suit all women. (Marie Hasler, National MP)

That's one of the problems. Women do not put themselves forward, very few women are interested in politics, and the ones that are, go into politics. I think women are interested in other things. It's just something that's happened, it's not that women are not capable. I think that it is that they get involved in other things. It's very easy to say that there are not enough women involved, but on the other hand if the women were there, they probably would get involved. (Penny Webster, ACT MP)

A number of women MPs held socialisation responsible for women's lack of interest in politics, which supports the literature accumulated in chapter two on socialisation as a barrier to participation. Lianne Dalziel explained how the socialisation process affects women:

Women are not necessarily brought up to push themselves forward, often we will wait to be asked, a kind of socialisation and it happens all the way through ... The way you were brought up you don't push up yourself forward you know, I think it is an issue that women don't put themselves forward so therefore, they don't get selected for better positions. And sometimes women will be also in the position where they'll say, I'll just do whatever you want me to do.

Similarly, a number of women MPs such as Labour's Helen Duncan and Steve Chadwick and National's Belinda Vernon observed that women tend to underestimate their potential due to a different socialisation process. Does it mean that women lack self-esteem and ambition? The Labour Minister Marian Hobbs replied:

I don't know about lack of ambition I've always had ambition, ... but confidence can go very fast, and that's a self-esteem thing. That I think is to do with socialisation because women always think about what we look like, we have to look in a certain way and so how we look, how we behave, we are really checked for that so often that the way to destroy your confidence is to jeer at you and people do, that's quite hard to cope with.

Again, Green Co-leader Jeanette Fitzsimmons' assertion is remarkable:

I'm sure that women by and large tend to be less ambitious and may have lower self-esteem.

Self-esteem seems to be a real problem and to acquire this women need personal encouragement and special mentoring. Some MPs expressed their own experience that unless they had been encouraged by others to stand, they would not be in parliament at all:

I think if the Labour Women's Council had not proactively encouraged me to stand I would not have stood, I would not have necessarily thought of that. (Judy Keall, Labour MP)

I don't think I ever saw myself as a politician, it was other women that said to me you must go and stand and that's because I took a stand ... But once I've done that I've tended to step back into my other roles, I never thought that you could widen a matter into other spheres as well, so it did take someone older and wiser who saw the potential to actually start to steer me quite aggressively. (Steve Chadwick, Labour MP)

In the previous chapter we found that women become more ambitious, develop high self-esteem and can get over stereotypical female roles when they socialise in an all girls family or the brothers are younger. In this situation parents encourage daughters to go into all sorts of careers which they might not if they had sons. It is demonstrated in the previous chapter through Helen Clark and Christine Fletcher's own statements. ACT MP Penny Webster found that element true in her own life. She was the President of Auckland Federated Farmers, did not find any discrimination in New Zealand society and believed that women can achieve anything if they want to. But why then did she feel a difference in growing up in all girl environment? In her own words:

I'm one of 6 girls, no brothers and I've got 4 daughters and 2 stepdaughters. It's great to have all girls in a family especially when you have a father who thinks you can do everything anyway.

Similarly, why do girl students avoid mathematics and science? Why do women need special mentoring and encouragement to come forward? Although more women are graduating than men why are they not getting the managerial jobs proportionately? These are a few of examples that originate from different kinds of socialisation process that is rooted in a culture where boys and girls socialise differently. Labour MP Steve Chadwick, held socialisation very much responsible for young women's more female roles which develop stereotype. She stated:

I still think we mother, our young women into more female roles. I still think we stereotype. I think that's part of the education curriculum that needs changing. We have been looking at more affirmative education initiatives, getting our women into sciences, maths. That's starting to change. It did not happen in my generation, my parents thought I'd be a nurse. But I used that process, that profession, to become political but they did not like it once I got noisy and political. They'd much rather I was the nurturer and the carer. And I think that's an inter-generational thing and needs to be broken down ... I saw it as a midwife. I picked up young girl babies differently to how I picked up boy babies. I saw parents do that. They didn't even realise that they did it. The way they talked about, everything from right from birth so even before that baby was born they had decided how they would respond emotionally if it was a girl or a boy. So it's generations to break that down.

A number of women MPs expressed the view that women's lack of self-esteem to come forward and lack of ambition for leadership positions are direct outcomes of the socialisation process. Also it is not surprising that lack of related experience or diversity in educational subject choice may have impacts on developing women's stereotypical behaviour. A former mathematics teacher, ACT MP Dr Muriel Newman expressed one of her biggest disappointments that women have failed to catch good opportunities as they lack technical experience. She emphasised women's mentoring and coaching in this area:

I taught maths at school and most girls were not interested in maths and I quickly figured out it was not because they were not any good at mathematics, its because at some stage they had a teacher who could not explain whatever it is and instead of maths is one of those subjects if you don't understand something if you are sort of stuck at the gate you can't sort of go through. And girls often learn slightly differently from boys and in a technical subject like maths its particularly true and if the girls had have been coached along so they would have been learnt to open the gate and go

through that one and get over the next hurdle and so on, they would have ended up being good at maths and I sometimes thought to myself imagine if you had half the girls in the country were really really good at mathematics instead of probably, I don't know what it is 15%, 10%, it would open up a whole lot of career opportunities or futures for girls that did not exist if they were not any good at it or had not any confidence in it.

However, all of the women MPs asserted that once they entered the parliament they did not lack self-esteem and their effectiveness was not affected due to lack of ambition and self-esteem.

An inquiry was made about discrimination whether it may be a cause of women's supply side problems in the parliament. We saw earlier that societal prejudice, discrimination and negative attitudes towards women were reflected both in political parties and in the parliament. Labour women not only proved themselves as effective, with their increasing numbers they fought against the discrimination and sexist behaviour of their male colleagues, an area where they failed in earlier days due to their lower numbers. The major credit goes to the party women whose effort helped the party men to change their attitudes gradually. They were found to be always ready to protest men's sexist comments and sexual prejudice from party to parliament. Labour MP Sonja Davies claimed that Labour women's continuous fight against men's negative attitudes in the party changed a lot of Labour men's attitudes towards women, compared to National Party men. Margaret Austin was another Labour MP who played a vital role in handling sexist comments towards the young women MPs in the parliament. When sexual innuendo upset the younger MPs, she used to write those exact comments in a notebook and cross check by asking the commentators "“Did you say this?” - ‘Yes.’ – ‘To whom was it directed? Was it so and so?’” The commentators finally got embarrassed. She repeated the exercise, which significantly reduced the whole thing (Baysting et al., 1993, p. 149). The much debated issue of ‘discrimination’ or teasing women as ‘granny’ etc. is no longer a factor in the New Zealand parliament. Most of them acknowledged that they had never been discriminated against for being a woman. Not only that people's attitudes are changed women as a group or personally are more capable to handle any discriminatory situation. Recalling her own experience, Helen Clark asserted, “When I first went to parliament the Labour Party caucus was a mean and nasty place and a lot of abusive ranting at people took place. I won't tolerate it now” (quoted in Ryan, 2001, p. 6). However, still some women find the

environment of the House not to their taste, and that affects their effectiveness. Asked whether Georgina Beyer's initial announcement of resigning from the parliament was due to discrimination, she responded:

Well can I assure you now that was nothing to do with prejudice or discrimination or whatsoever? The aspect of the job that I least like is what happens in the chamber ... So I said I did not like something about the parliament because the media naturally sort of go on what's wrong, what has happened? The first two thoughts they had I think was, you have been given a hard time, somebody sort of puts you down. Nothing of that sort. I've never experienced discrimination or prejudice from any of my colleagues and certainly not to my face and I mean that's across the House ... I think the chamber is designed to be adversarial ... Come here at 9-30 at night when we are debating pieces of legislation it is quite different. People find them boring generally to listen to ... I find a lot of work that goes on in the chamber is a waste of time because it is posturing and people positioning themselves to look better ... So I would rather not be in there and going to do other things that are far more productive.

Green Co-leader Jeanette Fitzsimmons found an exceptional cause behind the supply side problem of more qualified women. Do they feel a lack of power in parliament?

I think a lot of women are more appalled by the confrontational style of politics than men are. And there may also be some very smart women who figured out that parliament no longer has the power that it used to have in national decision making because globalisation has meant that many of the key decisions are actually made in the corporate world internationally.

This 'power' element did not get enough support from other MPs. Some MPs specifically mentioned that they believe in 'getting things done' rather than running after power. However, the style of parliamentary work aggravated the problem. The confrontational style of politics not only discourages women from entering the parliament, but some women in the House also take this personally.

Also we found that due to flat organisational background experience women have a tendency to exercise integrative leadership. That can also affect their effectiveness. While the Parsonian theory of effectiveness is based upon a hierarchical structure, some women MPs find this hierarchical component of the parliament hard to cope with. Labour Minister Marian Hobbs knows all about the glass ceilings in New Zealand society but never experienced any discrimination or barriers all through her professional life. She ruled out the phrase 'Cult of Domesticity' as a cause of women's unwillingness for a political career,

rather pointing out the style of the parliament. To her, parliament is a quite fearsome place and that is not the natural way that women always behave. She described her own experience:

When you say domesticity, it's capable women who are not necessarily domestic, who still don't come forward because the style of the way they work. I mean I found it hard. I led a very flat decision making team in a staff of between 80 and 90 people, I had a non-confrontational way of making decisions. I came into here, and it's hierarchical, it's adversarial, it's everything that I did not have in my own professional life. And it's daunting. (Marian Hobbs)

Discrimination against nominating women candidates is a barrier that we have identified earlier. Both in chapters four and five we have found traces of the element of discrimination. However, similar to male MPs' views, none of the female MPs admitted to personal experience with discrimination in terms of their electoral nomination. Female MPs from Labour, Greens, ACT and Alliance parties mentioned that they follow a gender balance policy in their parties. Each and every female MP of the Labour Party plus the Speaker claimed that the sole contribution of the Labour Party's gender balance policy was to reach a good representation stage for women in the New Zealand parliament. Labour MP Judy Keall put it:

I think one of the reasons we have been so successful in politics is our Labour Women's Council. It has actively promoted women, and women's role in the parliament and the other one is making policy not tea, we have encouraged women to take office in the Labour Party. We have gone further than that, we have done affirmative action, we have asked every branch committee and every Labour elected committee to have a women's liaison officer on it so that there is a position which is held for a woman. If no woman gets any other position on a committee there still has to be a women's liaison officer so a woman is on every committee ... We have this affirmative action, we have the Labour Women's Council which represents women as an organisation on a nation wide basis. We have women's day at least once a year before conference but we usually have a conference of our own during the year ... That's how proactive the Council was ... I mean that Council has been really good.

Another Labour MP, Helen Duncan, claimed:

The Labour Party...has a quite good reputation for promoting women and a steady improvement in the number of women representatives. I think that has been driven by women really working at it, the women within the Labour Party, women's network, the Women's Council ... I don't think it just happened, you have to just keep pushing away to make it happen.

By promoting women's issues from party platform Labour women have proved themselves as representatives for party and at the same time representatives for women. But party loyalty became dominant in expressing some MPs' views. For instance, we found that the National Party had a prejudice against selecting women. Also we posed a specific research question that do political parties have a prejudice against nominating women as electoral candidates? In personal interviews, almost all of the MPs accused National and other right wing parties of bias. However, without naming any party, National women designated gender-balanced party lists as preferential treatment. None of them admitted the accusation against their own party but acknowledged that the conservative National Party strictly believes in the merit system. For instance, National MP Ann Tolley mentioned that women have to compete on an equal footing against very talented men and she believes in quality rather than quantity in the parliament. National MP Belinda Vernon's verdict on National's changing role is:

Over time, National has not been seen as being a party that necessarily attracts women and I think that changed and I think women feel as comfortable in National Party philosophically as in any other party. I think also just the changing role of women. 20 years ago women were not in the workforce as evenly as they are today and that's also been reflected by the number of women who are offering themselves in the National Party. We have more women candidates in recent years. I think it's good that the party has used the list to ensure that women are brought into parliament for the National Party. But I think it also really important that women get here on the basis of merit not on the basis of some sort of quota and I think that the National Party can pride itself that it has got quality women and we don't believe in tokenism.

Does it mean that New Zealand women are less qualified than men? A previous chapter cited some facts and figures that more women than men got university degrees in New Zealand. What constitutes the supply side problem for one of the largest parties in New Zealand? Green MP Sue Kedgley pointed out National's conservative characteristics:

The National Party is very underrepresented with respect to women and I think that's because of the conservative old-fashioned parties are still dominated by old-fashioned values. I mean in the Green Party we make a very big point of having co-leaders, equal representation all the way through. So that equality between men and women is absolutely sort of fundamental to our party ... we should not have something that is dominated by men, we just think that is bizarre in our culture. But for the National Party that's still normal, because it's behind the time that conservative sort of environment and culture and that's the one is most underrepresentative is National. And

New Zealand First they don't have any women MPs and again they are a conservative old fashioned party with old fashioned conservative values.

Has the sub hypothesis that '*political parties have a prejudice against nominating women as electoral candidates*' been demonstrated in the New Zealand case? From the above discussion we cannot rule out, nor confirm, the possibility of prejudice against women in the National Party. It therefore, seems, both women's lack of interest to come forward and discrimination by right wing parties may be the causes of the supply side problem.

Before we start the discussion of how women exercise power in the parliament and the factors affecting their effectiveness, the question of women's suitability in politics needs to be addressed. There was a time when this issue was disputed on two characteristics; aggression and emotion. On emotion and aggression issues a great variety of responses have been gathered. Most of them pointed out that some male MPs particularly Richard Prebble cried several times in the parliament and some women MPs are aggressive. Two Green and two Alliance women MPs firmly rejected the necessity for aggressiveness in politics. Laila Harre responded:

I think sometimes women are more aggressive than men in parliament. I don't think aggressiveness is necessary, I don't do it.

Dr Liz Gordon's response to emotionality:

Most women politicians are really tough, they are strong women. It's all right to be emotional as long as it is seen that your rationality is stronger than your emotionality.

Green Co-leader Jeanette Fitzsimmons responded:

I don't think you need to be aggressive to be successful in politics but you need to be assertive. Some of the most aggressive people in parliament are actually the least effective – just getting up and making a lot of noise, jumping up and down and calling people names doesn't actually get things done or achieve any gains.

However, a majority of the women MPs hinted that parliament itself is a combative place and to compete with competent people, aggression and assertion is necessary. For example, Labour Minister Lianne Dalziel put it:

I can be aggressive when it suits me. The debating chamber itself is quite an aggressive environment and it is built on the fact that in order to govern, the government must hold the confidence of the parliament so as to win confidence and supply votes. So everything is dependent on that confidence.

Similarly as National MP Marie Hasler expressed it:

You have to be aggressive, because you are among a lot of ambitious, assertive and aggressive people, not all. It's a hard, it's a brutal field we are in. Because people are ambitious, aggressive and pretty confident and that's men and women and if you don't show these and if you don't think of a way to be up there you will just be left behind. It depends if you want to be. It's very competitive.

But a combination of emotion, assertion and aggression seem important to most of them.

On the question of women's emotional nature, Lianne Dalziel's response was:

It is more historical. It is true that women are often more emotionally affected but we are better hiding it now than we used to be ... I think that women as well as being emotional I think that is an excellent quality, because if you do not have empathy for people then I don't think you're a good representative of people. But you cannot turn that emotional response into anything other than a determination to fix to right the wrong and that's where I think people like Helen actually get this strength. She comes across publicly as very strong and she is a strong woman but she is also an incredibly caring woman and she will be gutted by things that happen but she would expect to determine to fix them. People say women are not strong because they are emotional, I actually think women are stronger because they have better emotional reaction.

Women's individuality is reflected through the question posed about emotion and aggression. The diversified replies are an indication of women's individual personality that supersedes their gender as a common platform. Similar opinions came from male MPs, which is an indication that there is no significant difference between male and female MPs in the parliament in terms of women's suitability in politics. However, one element of critical mass is that once women reach there, the parliamentary culture often turns into a less combative and more consensual style of management. But has it happened in the New Zealand Parliament? Georgina Beyer, Laila Harre, Marian Hobbs, Jeanette Fitzsimmons all acknowledged that parliament is a rough and combative work place for many. This reminds us of the finding of Grey (1999, p. 95) who asserted '...women MPs have not reached the critical mass necessary to impact upon the parliamentary culture in New Zealand...'

We intended to assess an individual MP's resource, position, expert and personal power, and try to determine their effectiveness through parliamentary activities such as holding of cabinet positions, select committee assignments, speaking ability and their overall reputation. It was seen earlier that women show their bias by choosing specific select committees and they are allocated broadly based social welfare cabinet portfolios. Controversy however, remains about whether women ask for them or they are allocated.

In chapter one, we posed a question: what causes women legislators to be stereotyped and focused on women and children's issues? We made a thorough investigation of women's stereotypical issue preference that can affect their exercise of power and influence in the parliament. However, almost all of the women MPs made it clear that all issues are women's issues and they affect the whole society. Some of these issues can directly affect women's lives. Women admitted their tendency to address women's issues but at the same time emphasised the importance of widening their issue preference. National MP, Belinda Vernon found that stereotypes are nearly broken down:

It's probably fair to say that women do seem to drift towards some of the social issues but I think women are also quite keen to breakout the stereotypes as well.

Green Co-leader, Jeannette Fitzsimmons, acknowledged only to a very small degree stereotypes in the New Zealand parliament indicating that women are interested in commerce, business, economy, natural resources, telecommunications and a range of other areas. She pointed out the width of women's interests:

I was not directly involved in any women's organisation but I give money to women's refuge. My political and research interests have been in different areas. I think if women politicians only concentrate on women's issues, then we get the situation where they have good representation on things like health, social welfare, children's issues, and education but they're having no input into economic decisions, natural resources, energy, which are the areas I concentrate on. I think it's important that women be free to go into politics and to do the job without concentrating on women's issues.

However, although some women MPs deliberately avoid initiating social issues and do not confine themselves to women's issues, they take part in every social issue that is raised in the parliament. National MP Marie Hasler is one criticised by feminists for not taking enough interest in the women's movement and network. She observed women

parliamentarians have a tendency to be all rounders in the mainstream. Also she did not consider women's issues as a separate category and warned against taking only gender based roles:

I see paid parental leave as a family and society's issue. I don't think employers should pay I think it's all of society because children are our investment, men should be as interested in that ... I think I just see women's issues as human issues. I think we should all be interested and I expect men should be interested too and lot more are now. In our party they are pretty good because if you ghettoized yourself so that you are only interested in women's issues, then you are not taken seriously. If men just say I'm only interested in men's issues, what would happen?

In addition to showing women MPs' own interest, their placement in select committees is another technique to observe their issue bias. Therefore, the select committee composition in the 46th parliament is analysed. Following the international trend, broadly we consider education and science, health and social services committees are women's traditional area of interests. It is true that more women were placed in these committees such as 5 in both the education and science and health committees each of that were composed of 8 members.

Table 6.1. Gender gap in select committees²

Select Committee	Number of male MPs	Number of female MPs	Gender gap	Chair
Commerce	5	3	2	Man
Education and Science	3	5	2	Woman
Employment and Accident Insurance Legislation	9	3	6	Man
Finance and Expenditure	11	2	9	Man
Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade	8	1	7	Man
Government Administration	6	2	4	Woman
Health	3	5	2	Woman
Justice and Electoral	8	2	6	Man
Law and Order	6	4	2	Woman
Local Government and Environment	6	4	2	Woman
Maori Affairs	8	1	7	Man
Officers of Parliament	8	0	8	Man
Primary Production	10	0	10	Man
Privileges	7	3	4	Woman
Regulations Review	5	3	2	Man
Social Services	3	7	4	Man
Standing Orders	10	0	10	Man
Transport and Industrial Relations	5	3	2	Man

² See the Parliamentary Bulletin, 2002a, pp. 13-4.

In both cases chairpersons and deputy chairpersons were women. Although the social services committee was composed of 7 women MPs out of 10 members, male MPs held the positions of chairperson and deputy chairperson. Does it mean that male MPs are also interested in social issues? We saw earlier that social welfare portfolios and committees are key decision making areas in welfare states. However, the scenario with a slight increase in gender gaps in these three select committees seems to be a reflection of women MPs' issue bias. Nonetheless, as in the past, women MPs were not directed towards these committees rather they asked for them. Even realising it as a problem, some women MPs do not wish to overcome their preference. Labour MP Judy Keall said:

...it is still the problem that when it comes to things like health you often get more interest from the women than the men. But that was a choice thing. I asked for health, I wanted to be the chair of the health committee, it was my choice.

But why do some women MPs have a tendency to address certain issues? Two distinct kinds of opinions have been found: expertise and natural inclination and/or antipathy. Due to previous occupational background and expertise some MPs do not think that they would be effective in other areas. None of them acknowledged this as their stereotypical issue preference rather they claimed expertise. Significant examples are as follows:

I asked for the social services, health committee because there is my expertise, I'm a doctor. If I would be placed in finance, it would be hopeless. (Dr Lynda Scott, National MP)

In my own case I would have no interest in going on the defence select committee. War is worrying and military is dreadful stuff. My only interest in the military is how appallingly they treat women and they do ... In terms of finance and expenditure, I actually wanted to go on that committee but it's a kind of like prior experience catches up with you. I had been involved in those kind of social welfare portfolios. (Dr Liz Gordon, Alliance MP)

However, whatever select committees women MPs are located in, their concern for certain issues appears as a natural phenomenon. National MP Pansy Wong who was a member of the commerce committee explained this situation:

When it comes to childcare and issues affecting women or women's health I mean naturally when you are part of that population, you tend to get more

interested in those issues, it's a natural thing that your gender perspective is almost part of you, it can't be separated.

Minister Laila Harre did not see certain select committee preference as a problem rather she believed that effectiveness can be achieved by their personal preference:

I think it will reflect people's priorities for where they think they can be effective. It reflects on the job categorisation or job choices that people make before they get into parliament, because most people come to parliament after having pursued a career in something else first. So where they'll feel they can be most effective in parliament will tend to have some reflection on what they were doing before they came into parliament.

Another side of the coin is Table 6.1, which displays big gender gaps in select committees. Women were placed in every committee except the officers of parliament, standing orders and primary production committees. This may be due to women's lower number. But what happened to the much debated powerful committees such as finance and expenditure and foreign affairs committees? Out of 13 members, only 2 women MPs were found in the finance and expenditure committee. Similarly, only one woman MP was found in the foreign affairs, defence and trade committee out of its 9 members. None of these 3 MPs were chairpersons or deputy chairpersons. Whether there is any discrimination in allocating committees or whether men get preference in certain attractive committees, most of the women MPs were not sure. As ACT MP Penny Webster observed "I'm not too sure that men get preference in certain committees, I wanted transport and I got it." MPs such as Dr Muriel Newman, Dr Liz Gordon, Pansy Wong were particularly interested in the powerful finance select committee but due to lack of their background and experience in finance, economist male MPs got preference.

Altogether 32 women MPs have been found in select committees and a careful observation suggests that their issue bias is less evident. As in the previous manner if we consider education and science, health and social services committees are women's traditional areas to deal with and others are non-traditional areas, the following table may show an interesting scenario.

Table 6.2. Women MPs' issue choice³

Women in traditional areas	Women in non-traditional areas	Women in both areas
10 (31%)	17 (53%)	5 (16%)

A majority of women MPs are found in the non-traditional areas. It reminds us that for a small parliament like New Zealand less opportunity is available to develop specialisation. A diversification of issue choice is therefore reflected through a majority of women MPs' exercise of resource power through select committees work.

New Zealand women MPs do not have any formal women's caucus. We saw earlier that for philosophical reasons, women MPs were not that desperate to form any such caucus. However, they met on certain occasions. Minister and Labour MP Ruth Dyson stated:

We had a breakfast this year on women's Suffrage day where women in all parties were invited to meet with some students from the high school to talk about their priorities for women in the future which was really interesting because their priorities are quite different than ours ... But the only time other than that that I can remember I was meeting together with all the women was during Winston Peters' referendum on superannuation where all the women across all the parties got together to oppose it and that was very good.

It has been mentioned in the previous chapter that resistance to the compulsory superannuation bill is the only occasion when women MPs worked together effectively as a bipartisan group in the New Zealand parliament. Without forming any caucus across party lines, how do they work on issues like prostitution and abortion law reforms that largely address women's problems? In fact, it is the single party Labour women's caucus in the parliament that brings issues into dialogue. The women's caucus sets the women's agenda and priorities across all portfolios and then convinces their male colleagues. Labour MP Steve Chadwick is extremely happy with their success and the collective nature of her party; with the fairness on gender issues in particular. This tends to support our sub hypothesis that *'group power is an important basis of an individual power.'*

We found that New Zealand women MPs are recognised as professionals but it seems their professionalism originates from almost similar fields, that is, broadly, social science. Lack

³ The table is built up from women MPs' placement in different select committees.

of diversity and expertise in technical subjects seems to be a great concern and Dr Muriel Newman mentioned that parliament could not attract women with technical expertise. So how are technical matters resolved in the parliament? Dr Newman explains the difficulty of it:

We have just had the telecommunications bill go through the parliament and I'm the spokesman sort of in charge of that and I mean this is really difficult stuff, it's like the radio communications bill that went through about two years ago. I suspect that most members who spoke on it actually did not understand what it was all about. I mean you understood bits of it but you certainly would not have been able to understand the whole lot because you are talking about various frequencies and just all sorts of things that unless you have been brought up in that world, are difficult to grasp. And also you are talking about legislation which makes it even harder because often legislation is not black and white, it's shades of grey. And you have got mechanisms in there to make sure the payments are right or the levies are right and the formula are always very complicated and so the people who do best in those areas are the ones who have got a background in that ... And I think parliament does not necessarily attract that sort of women.

The example above tends to support the sub hypothesis that *'professional occupations and labour market participation are important sources of political effectiveness.'* However, the root cause of the problem seems to lie in another barrier. In fact, development of expertise depends on socialisation and the education process. A particular socialisation process not only develops stereotypes, it is a barrier against developing expertise. Among many others, Minister Laila Harre and Labour MP Steve Chadwick specifically acknowledged that. The Labour Minister Marian Hobbs, a former girls' school principal, shared her experience:

It's a lot to do with education and with how we learn. I used to be a principal of a girls' school, I'm worried that our young women weren't taking science and maths. I'm also worried that at certain stages the old biological clock would go in them and they don't take as many risks, and because they don't take as many risks, they therefore don't grasp out for the opportunities.

Overall, women MPs have widened their areas of interest compared with the past. Individual parties are also making a special effort to encourage women to broaden their interests and the Labour Party pioneers that. The Labour caucus Secretary Dianne Yates denied women's lack of interest in the foreign affairs and finance committees. She disclosed the strategy of the Labour Party, how vigorously it is promoting women to overcome their certain committee preference:

Women are interested, I have been on the foreign affairs committee. Women MPs are monitoring these things very very carefully and still there is an assumption in this place, there is also lobbying for some of those positions because foreign affairs people get more trips, don't they? They go overseas more often and I'm just constantly saying to women MPs, you must put your name forward. We do have women here on the finance committee. Remember that we have only got 1/3 rd of women anyhow, so we are going to have few women on all committees. But we as women within our caucus do monitor. There are other roles like the whips roles and we have got 2 men at the moment, we have had women as whips, we do not have now. We are actually saying next time round we have to monitor carefully and make sure that there are women in those particular roles. So I can assure you that our women's caucus is monitoring very carefully, who gets what jobs.

Also, Prime Minister Helen Clark personally monitors and encourages women MPs to expand their interests in other areas. Steve Chadwick explained her story:

It has been a very deliberate strategy to try and get on a committee like commerce, which was predominantly seen as a male domain. But I think Helen worked very hard toward that. I did not think myself about commerce, because she knows politics, she knew the importance of getting established on one of those credible committees very early and pushed me to do that, so that was interesting. That was not something that I designed or saw and I think sometimes we are a bit hesitant also about stepping out of our comfort zone and I did not actually see it. Now I wish I have got at my other natural committees which is where I come from which is health and probably wished I have done police just so that you completely smash down those old perceptions that automatically they are on another committee that was natural to your background and trained in. And I think I would encourage other young women to think I would do what Helen did to me to think about the hard nosed ones and determined that I wanted to be there.

Most of the women MPs admitted the natural difference between men and women and mentioned that they have a different perspective. They feel responsible to women but at the same time they do not want to be stereotyped with issues related to women only. Except for a few, their involvement with feminist and women's organisations is well established. National MP Ann Tolley responded:

I want to be judged exactly on the same terms as a man, accepting that I'm a woman. I always call myself a feminist. Women's issues is a trap and it is very easy to categorise women for social issues.

A specific question was asked of the MPs who call themselves feminists of how they priorities their work. Do they put women's issues at the top? Lianne Dalziel responded that there is no priority for any particular job but "it is always a balancing act." Similarly, MP Ruth Dyson did not recognise women's issues as separate. Her response:

I think they all need to be done. So I just make sure that I've time for all. I don't have one that would take precedence over another so I've some parts of my day in my week I allocate electorate time, some my select committee, some for my legislative work, reading, some for relaxing even. Women's issues are part of my work.

Another feminist MP Dr Liz Gordon's response:

I don't deliberately put myself out to be a role model. What I tend to do is that sort of work that I consider I have responsibilities for as a feminist woman MP ... The job is incredibly a diverse job and each bit and piece is important ... I've got lots of priorities and women are one of them. Education is obviously a key thing for me ... I only put women on top in as much as a feminist woman obviously women's issues will concern me. You see the issues we deal with are often so crucial to people's lives.

Although women think that they are expected to bring women's issues to the fore, this is not always the case. MP Dianne Yates found that sometimes voters question the justification of voting for women candidates as they found women only raise issues that affect women. This finding is supportive of the hypothesis that *'representing women only may limit women's ability to fulfil their other representative roles.'* However, as these issues are important someone has to do it and, in any case, there are many other ways those issues can be raised. Former Labour MP Jill White stated:

I think that it is really important that women do bring their worldview which includes women and children's issues but that is not limited to that and there is not the expectation that is all women will do. Look at Margaret Wilson for example and I think she brings really valuable perspectives from her knowledge of the world of law. Look at Jeanette Fitzsimmons and the issues that she brings about the environment that are now immensely important. So women's horizons are not just limited to what are stereotypically called women and children, that is really important that there are the people who are dealing with those women and children's issues. And can I say specially children's issues. I think we are facing a crisis in New Zealand at the moment about the place of children and the care and nurture of children in our society.

Exercise of position power through cabinet portfolios is a well-recognised source of power, leading to effectiveness. National MP Pansy Wong believed that instead of concentrating on certain issues, the holding of portfolios is the key place to be effective in addressing different issues:

...when you have been in the parliament for a while, you get more experience then you realise that might be for pushing women's issues you need to get into portfolios like finance etc. then you can actually be a lot more effective. For example, to be caring and delivering women's health you have to be the minister of health. Look after the whole portfolio which woman is part of.

This proposition seems to be true for some experienced MPs. By holding portfolios different from their background, they appeared to overcome their issue preference and involvement in the parliament. For instance, Minister Marian Hobbs has a background and interest in education as she used to be principal of a girls' school but served in the finance, environment, and defence cabinet committees. Her cabinet portfolios of national archives and broadcasting did not go along with any stereotypical issues. Similarly, with the expertise on industrial relations, labour law and employment, Laila Harre served as the Minister for Women's Affairs and Minister for Statistics. Immigration Minister Lianne Dalziel had a background in the trade union movement. However, in addition to their allocated portfolios, these key cabinet ministers are very keen to address some other issues that directly and indirectly affect women. Marian Hobbs is supportive of women's organisations and women in education is her area of interests. Laila Harre, who is popularly known as the initiator of the paid parental leave bill in the 46th parliament, has always been interested in how industrial relations, labour law and employment create an impact on women. Low paid women workers had been a key issue for Lianne Dalziel. She is interested in developing new policies in prostitution law reform, guardianship, marriage break ups and property relationships.

We dealt earlier with the much debated stepping-stones theory for the position of heads of state. Following others, Reynolds (1999, p. 564) claimed that harder portfolios such as economic planning, national security and foreign affairs are considered as stepping-stones to national leadership. As we have seen while Reynolds (1999), Kirkpatrick (1974, 1995) and Carras (1995) undervalued the health, education and social welfare ministries and believed that power and influence lay with portfolios such as defence, foreign affairs, finance and home affairs, that theory does not seem to apply in New Zealand. Since the two party system began in New Zealand in 1935, a total of 15 prime ministers have served the country. What were the 'stepping-stones' for these 15 leaders? To analyse this, their portfolio allocation prior to their prime ministerships, is shown in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3. Portfolios held by Prime Ministers of New Zealand before first becoming Prime Ministers⁴

Name of the Prime Ministers	Party	Tenure	Portfolios served
Michael Joseph Savage	Labour	6 Dec 1935-27 Mar 1940	None
Peter Fraser	Labour	1 Apr 1940-13 Dec 1949	Health, Education, Maori Affairs
Sidney George Holland	National	13 Dec 1949-20 Sep 1957	None
Walter Nash	Labour	12 Dec 1957-12 Dec 1960	Finance
Keith Jacka Holyoake	National	12 Dec 1960-7 Feb 1972	Agriculture
John Ross Marshall	National	7 Feb 1972-8 Dec 1972	Health, Attorney-General, Justice, Overseas Trade and Industry & Commerce
Norman Kirk	Labour	8 Dec 1972-31 Aug 1974	None
Wallace Bill Rowling	Labour	6 Sept 1974-12 Dec 1975	Finance
Robert Muldoon	National	12 Dec 1975-26 July 1984	Tourism, Finance
David Lange	Labour	26 July 1984-8 Aug 1989	None
Geoffrey Palmer	Labour	8 Aug 1989-4 Sept 1990	Attorney-General, Justice, Environment
Mike Moore	Labour	4 Sept 1990-2 Nov 1990	Overseas Trade and Marketing, Tourism, Sport and Recreation, External Relations and Trade, Foreign Affairs
Jim Bolger	National	2 Nov 1990-8 Dec 1997	Fisheries, Agriculture, Maori Affairs, Immigration, Labour
Jenny Shipley	National	8 Dec 1997-10 Dec 1999	Social Welfare, Health, Women's Affairs, Minister of State Services, Transport, State Owned Enterprises, ACC and Radio New Zealand
Helen Clark	Labour	10 Dec 1999-	Conservation, Housing, Health, Labour

The table does not show any consistent pattern of holding the so-called powerful and prestigious portfolios prior to appointment as prime minister. Four of the prime ministers had no portfolio experience at all. Three had finance, one had foreign affairs and none had defence. Surprisingly, four held the health portfolio. Overseas trade and the attorney generalship seem to be two promising portfolios. None of the first and last three prime ministers however, held any such promising portfolios. In fact, the 'stepping-stones' theory

⁴ See 1. New Zealand in History at <http://www.history-nz.org/ministers.html>; 2. Prime Ministers of New Zealand at <http://www.primeminister.govt.nz/oldpms/index.html>

seems never to have been a big factor in New Zealand not only for women but also for male heads of state.

However, in New Zealand, there was a tendency in the past for prime ministers to hold the foreign affairs portfolio concurrently, e.g., David Lange held foreign affairs followed by education. Henderson (2001, p. 110) argued that although the prime ministers will need to continue attending major international and regional meetings, the practice of holding the foreign affairs portfolio is unlikely to revive. Despite Helen Clark's personal interest in international relations, she opted for the arts and culture portfolio rather than foreign affairs. Similarly, during her tenure as prime minister, Jenny Shipley held the portfolio of the ministry of women's affairs which she thought part of her role as a promoter of women's interests. Overall, recent prime ministers of New Zealand have tended to reduce their number of portfolios (McMillan, 1993, p. 81). Any portfolio can be considered as 'stepping-stones' these days. Moreover, Reynolds's so-called 'prestigious positions' carry less merit in New Zealand.

Similarly, the hypothesised global tendency of softer and harder portfolios does not seem to be true for New Zealand. While serving in the social welfare portfolio Jenny Shipley was acknowledged by many of her colleagues including those on the opposition benches as a very competent and powerful politician (Baysting et al., 1993). During the crisis of the National coalition government in 1997, rather than the foreign affairs, defence and finance ministers, Jenny Shipley became the Prime Minister of New Zealand. Her drive, personality and leadership style led her to achieve the top position. Both the present Prime Minister, Helen Clark, and Jenny Shipley, earned reputations as tough women while they served as health and social welfare ministers. Helen Clark acknowledged health is the hardest job, as powerful lobby groups are very vocal and the issues are complex. She made lots of enemies in the pharmaceutical, tobacco and alcohol industries by making tough laws during her 1987-90 tenure and had to face lawsuits. She sacked the Auckland Health Board allegedly for its poor performance while her husband was a member (McCallum, 1993, p. 152). Helen Clark has also earned a good reputation for her "fiscally prudent and instinctively pragmatic management style" (Miller, 2001, p. 232).

We saw earlier that legislative power can also be assessed in terms of the resources allocated. From that point of view the finance ministry is resource rich, as it involves the allocation of money to other ministries. Researchers have found a positive correlation between power and the complexity of the subject matter of law and finance; therefore, the finance portfolio is not just given to anyone without requisite expertise. However, many ministers of finance do not have accountancy or economic qualifications in New Zealand and yet they have developed expertise on financial management. For example, Bill Birch was qualified in surveying, Michael Cullen in history. Due to her legal qualifications and professional background in finance, Ruth Richardson was given the finance ministry. She earned both a national and international reputation and was named as a 'runner-up Finance Minister of the year'⁵ in 1992 by the international magazine *Euromoney*.

When the former Prime Minister Jenny Shipley was asked about her preference for the social welfare ministry, she replied that it was because of its large budget and its linkage with economic policy (McCallum, 1993, p. 231). Similarly, the health sector of New Zealand gets more media coverage than defence, due to its large workforce and extensive contacts with the population. The health expenditure surpassed the size of defence expenditure by 1965, and in the year 2000 it was over five times as large as defence. A significant factor here is that New Zealand is not a world power and this affects comparative defence expenditure. While the defence ministry was allocated \$1827.174 million, the health ministry's allocation was \$7195.156 million for the financial year 2000/2001.⁶ If monetary power brings prestige for the finance portfolio, health and social welfare can stand at the forefront due to their large budget allocations. Health seems a promising 'stepping-stone' in contemporary New Zealand as four of the prime ministers held this portfolio (Table 6.3) and women often held it. In 2001, the current health minister of New Zealand is a woman and if women often lead the largest ministries in terms of budget and workforce, it would be misleading to judge them as less influential. Overall, it appears that the traditional pattern of recognising certain portfolios as 'prestigious' and 'powerful', with the possible exception of finance, carries little merit, at least for New Zealand.

⁵ See Richardson, 1995, p. 183.

⁶ See Budget 2000 in The Estimates of Appropriations for the Government of New Zealand. B.5 Vo.1 (pp., 330, 342, 626, 664).

Neither ‘stepping-stones’ nor gender preferences are clear for the 1999-2002 cabinet portfolios in New Zealand. Although men hold defence and finance we have already argued earlier that these portfolios do not appear to have been promising ‘stepping-stones’ for past prime ministers. Certainly, the overall world trend for education and social welfare ministries being headed by women does not apply in New Zealand. These portfolios often belong to males. In contrast, females hold the attorney general, labour and immigration portfolios.

Another source of position power is previous experience in local government institutions, which is recognised as a stepping-stone in New Zealand. A significant number of both male and female MPs had local government experience. From her own experience, Labour MP Georgina Beyer found that her position as Mayor of Carterton District Council worked as grounding for her future political career. Labour MP Ruth Dyson specifically stated that local government experience was a stepping-stone to a parliamentary career for many New Zealand women. However, in chapter six we saw two propositions questioning women’s involvement in local government: (i) local government institutions are less powerful, and (ii) women’s willingness to work within a close vicinity to home. While we checked these propositions among the interviewees, the second one gets some weight for specific reasons. National MP Ann Tolley explained her involvement in local government to stay home for a certain period of time:

Yes I did that. That was a choice I made quite deliberately that I went into local government while my children were at home. Once my children have left home then I have been involved in national politics because the travel involved that takes you away from your family.

Our study is also intended to evaluate the women leaders of the three countries selected. The Prime Minister Helen Clark was not available for interview but surprisingly almost every woman MP talked about her in one way or another without being asked. For instance, on the aggression issue, the only anonymous MP’s comment was “Helen Clark is an aggressive person.” Some other opposition MPs described her as aggressive too. But her party colleagues found her a tough person and a combination of all qualities made her successful:

Look at Helen Clark. I just think she comes across as a really strong leader, she demonstrates emotion when it is appropriate, she can be really assertive, put her case very strongly when she needs to. (Jill White)

I think if you are going to be involved in politics you certainly have to develop a certain amount of toughness and I think amongst our Labour women we have got some pretty tough ladies including Helen Clark. She has got a very good balance of head and heart, she can be as tough as she needs to be. She is a very good leader because she is very inclusive in the caucus and I think that's one of the strengths of the majority of women. (Judy Keall)

While she is regarded as a tough person, her passion for women's special needs are also acknowledged although she had no connections with women's organisations and networks. On this, Lianne Dalziel compared the two New Zealand women leaders:

The opposition has been very hard on women. They had a woman leader but she did not put any other women on the front bench, she demoted women and I found there is some very talented women on the opposition but she did not bring them forward. That's the opposite of Helen Clark. She brings people forward with talent and she supports women's causes, because she always has and that's just been where she has come from.

Similarly, Judy Keall found Helen Clark's keenness for women's causes:

Women do have a special contribution to make. I think we come more often from a background where we have better knowledge of the community and women and children's issues and I would include Helen Clark in that because she is an excellent person and she had a good awareness of women's issues.

The above scenario reminds us about 'womanpower', a special kind of power. We found earlier that womanpower does not believe in the Parsonian theory of simply 'getting things done' but tries to integrate other female qualities of caring and nurturing into their agendas and the mainstream. It seems New Zealand women leaders and MPs exercise their resource, position and personal power as multiple issue legislators. We recognised that women in this category are more powerful and effective and similarly, regarding women's suitability in politics, aggression and emotion, their individuality appeared prominently. During the 1960s male MPs faulted women for being emotional and not aggressive enough for politics, but what is the situation now? A significant number of both male and female MPs believed in the importance of aggression in politics and found most of the women MPs are tough. Therefore, simply categorising women as an emotional group does not appear to be true any more. They acknowledged that having emotion is a good quality but

everyone emphasised the necessity for assertiveness and toughness. While women's self-esteem and ambition appear to be a societal problem, almost all women MPs affirmed that unless they have high self-esteem and ambition they would not be able to reach the parliament. We saw earlier that quite a few women MPs left parliament, as they did not get their desired positions. Former MP Jill White is one of that kind of ambitious MP who resigned from the parliament because her constituency was abolished due to restructuring. She asserted:

I certainly prefer to be an electorate MP than to be a list MP.

Although women MPs differed in terms of party policies, regardless of party, they praised each other for their effectiveness. No distinctions were made by any of the interviewees between Maori and non-Maori MPs. All of them found themselves effective, ambitious, strong, tough, articulate, well organised, well qualified, competent, accountable and responsible in parliamentary work. Regarding their relative effectiveness to men, most of them mentioned that women are as effective as men and lot of women are more effective than men. However, to them politics these days is not about gender but more of individual personality, experience and background. Overall, New Zealand women MPs have widened their areas of interests. Although they tend not to be stereotyped into so called women's issues, they do not and cannot avoid the issues that affect women's lives. Most of them acknowledged that this is their natural inclination and they do not see any problem with it.

Different networks and organisations appeared as sources of group power, influence and effectiveness for women MPs. Most of them were involved in some kind of women's movement and networks, which are the recognised source of power and influence. Green MP Sue Kedgley is one of those who emerged from it and described how it influenced and helped raise the consciousness of women:

In New Zealand, the women's movement became a middle class mainstream percolated right through our society and it takes some time, so you started in the early 70s where women raised their expectations and developed their skills, their degrees and experience and whatever. And we have a generation of women appearing a couple of decades later, very well qualified, very confident, articulate. And a lot of women emerged by that directly because of their involvement in the women's movement in the case of myself and some others. Or indirectly, I think Helen Clark, she was never in the women's movement but she sort went along to the odd [meeting] and spoke

at the odd this or that. She certainly I think acknowledges that she was very conscious of it and it influenced her. I think the second wave of feminism was very significant in New Zealand in terms of changing consciousness. So that is percolating, not really fast enough but it is one of the reasons really what I would say is why we see more women in the parliament. (Sue Kedgley)

Some women MPs had no connection with the women's movement but they had other network and professional organisation involvement. ACT MP Dr Muriel Newman is one of those who had benefited from her professional organisation:

I think that belonging to networks is a very big benefit for an MP. If you have got credibility in a network then you will often gear them into your party as a voting base. I've been President of the Chamber of Commerce.

All of the women MPs held membership and executive positions in their respective political parties that helped them to make decisions in the parliament. They found that party membership gives credibility to advance further. Except for the Speaker, almost all male MPs denied the allegation that political parties discriminate against women's nomination. While other women MPs accused the National Party of discriminating against women, all National Party women MPs denied this allegation by stating that the National Party believes in merit. Here, party loyalty appears as a dominant factor rather than women's inclination towards women.

Another source of institutional power is the MMP electoral system. Although different causes appeared for women's numerical underrepresentation in the New Zealand parliament, a unanimous opinion came from all of the women MPs that underrepresentation is not serious as more than a third of the parliament is women. Unlike the Nordic countries, the system approach has a specific impact and has been proved useful in New Zealand. Most of the women MPs found the previous FPP electoral system a hard one that worked against women getting the nomination in safe constituency seats. All of them spoke very highly about MMP, that it makes a huge difference helping to balancing the gender ratio. They are hopeful that through the provision of list seats, women's number is increasing in the parliament. Small parties like ACT, Green and Alliance MPs are very pleased that MMP brought them into the parliament. So is with different ethnic groups, Maori in particular. It reminds us of the aim of the Royal Commission on the Electoral System to achieve the effective representation stage in the New Zealand parliament.

While women's representation in some other sectors is slower, their parliamentary representation is something that New Zealand women can be proud of. What is the cause of New Zealand women's relative success in parliamentary representation without any artificial aids such as quotas and reserved seats? Starting from the beginning of women's suffrage, New Zealand women's barriers were no lower than other societies. Following Wängnerud's (2000) strategy approach for Nordic countries, one party in New Zealand i.e., the Labour Party gets the maximum credit for the relative success of women's parliamentary representation. However, unlike the Nordic countries, there was no provision for quotas and reserved seats within the New Zealand Labour Party itself. Similarly, party elites in New Zealand were not equally sympathetic to women's causes. But the cause of the success of New Zealand women is the second strategy of Wängnerud i.e., party women themselves were organised and mobilised to promote their concerns. It was a gradual process that started with Labour women's entry into the party hierarchy and culminated in their election as party presidents and executives. At first they had to prove their competency for the power structure. Once they gained power through their greater number and position within the party, it was relatively easier for them to address women's issues from the party platform with less resistance. Among the sources of institutional power, women's active involvement in political parties and the Labour Party's vigorous campaign for women's participation, worked as favourable tools. The Labour Party has a target to achieve half-and-half representation by the year 2010. Thus it appears that strategy has made a greater contribution than the system, such as culture. The MMP electoral system introduced in 1996 served to reinforce the success of women's representation rather than create it. Therefore, the sub hypothesis that *'systems rather than strategies are the key to success behind women's significant legislative representation in New Zealand'* tends to get less support.

Structurally, the country's Western democracy and developed economy also played a significant role in smoothing women's participation in politics. The two sub hypotheses in this connection that *'democracy plays a facilitating role in women's effective representation'* and *'the socio-economic condition of a state is a crucial component for power and effectiveness'* are supported in the case of New Zealand.

At the beginning of chapter four we quoted some national and international media comments about New Zealand women MPs' and leaders' good reputations. Along with other *event* approaches, I have followed this kind of *reputational* approach to observe women MPs' effectiveness. Other than the structured interview questions and replies, one personal observation about women MPs needs to be addressed. All of them appeared to be very capable, confident and competent. I did not experience any hesitation on their part in replying to any particular question. I attended three regular weekly sessions of 'Questions for Oral Answers' and listened to several radio transmissions of the same, and found women MPs are equally as vocal as male MPs in the House. It contradicts one finding of the US legislatures that more women means more silence. I have also had opportunities to attend several public meetings, seminars and conferences where women MPs delivered formal speech and papers. It must be acknowledged that their speaking ability is beyond question. Unlike the past, the media readily accepts women leaders these days, as Helen Clark acknowledged.⁷

6.3 Summary and conclusion

Finally, let us address the questions we posed at the beginning of the chapter. Overall, male MPs did not notice any difference between male and female MPs. They evaluated female MPs as effective as themselves. Most of them did not recognise women as a separate category in the parliament did not evaluate women along the gender line.

The numerical underrepresentation is thought to be the result of women's less willingness to come forward. In chapter five, we targeted this element as a supply side problem and it now seems that there is some truth in this finding. But what makes women less interested in a political career? Women's child caring and family responsibility appeared to be prominent which accords the literature review in chapter two. Although, all women do not have these responsibilities, they still do not show enough interest. A different socialisation process is held responsible for achieving self-esteem and ambition. Culture thus becomes dominant where boy and girl children grow up in a different environment. Although men do not share family responsibility at a 50% rate, patriarchal culture gets less support as the

⁷ As there was no role model of women in New Zealand politics, she was treated roughly by the media during her first three years of opposition leader, but now people are used to women leaders. See Ryan, 2001, p. 6.

cause of women's underrepresentation. Some however, recognised that few elements of patriarchy are carried on in the society unchallenged, but still women have every opportunity to choose their own career. Stereotypical behaviour and issue preference is the outcome of socialisation that is deeply rooted in the culture and we have seen that the majority of New Zealand women MPs are concerned about this problem. The Cult of Domesticity may have had less impact on women. But women's stereotypical behaviour is the outcome of a different socialisation process. In chapter two we have seen that societal barriers such as women's reproductive role; private and public roles; cultural, and religious norms are interconnected and overlapping. Religion does not seem to be a barrier. Also, culture directly does not create barriers. But it has an indirect impact leading to two genders with distinct responsibilities, socialising men and women differently and thus creating stereotypes. By such means culture has an indirect impact on women's legislative participation and effectiveness in New Zealand.

A significant number of women MPs raised the issue of the confrontational style of politics and parliament putting many women off this career. Although most of the male MPs did not acknowledge that women are discriminated against in achieving electoral nomination, the role of the National Party is still questionable. Both male and female MPs failed to reach a consensus on the cause of women's numerical underrepresentation in the parliament but indicated a combination of causes.

No prominent barriers appeared against achieving women MPs' effectiveness. However, a trace of stereotypical issue preference is evident both in male and female MPs. This means men and women believe they are good at different things. We saw in the theoretical framework that power and influence is necessary to address any issue effectively, thus social welfare issues also involve power. Although wherever they work, New Zealand women MPs' efficiency is beyond question, it is necessary to expand their area of interests to be more effective in obtaining leadership positions. However, strict confinement to certain issues is not evident; women appear as multiple issues legislators. As lack of expertise in all areas seems to be a minor problem, a number of steps have been taken to widen women's area of interests. Through mentoring, several women MPs have chosen to work in non-traditional areas to break the notion of stereotypes.

As per plan we have used several indicators for assessing effectiveness through *event* and *reputational* approaches such as select committee and cabinet positions; speaking ability and overall reputation. Being chairpersons of select committees women exercise resource power. They exercise position power by holding diversified portfolios and there appeared to be no such soft and hard portfolios as stepping-stones for New Zealand women MPs. In addition to their inclination towards women's issues, their wider choice of work reminds us of the theoretical framework that they are not single-issue legislators. However, women in New Zealand parliament are not a homogeneous group, they have diversified issue choice and personality. A majority of them however, care about women's interests. While they are representing the party, the nation and their constituencies, they are also working for women's issues. They are not only interested in getting things done but give special attention to other social issues. Our effective representation framework suggests that these women are not confined to particular issues, rather they feel responsible and accountable to serve their political party, electorates and women. Through political parties they are working for the nation. With a few exceptions they proved that women can be effective as general legislative representatives and at the same time they can be effective as women's representatives. Their multiple issue choice and obligation to serve can be counted in favour of them as effective and influential. Their effectiveness is not only proved by their own work, but also as judged by the male MPs. The overall findings tend to support one of our main hypotheses that '*women's effective legislative representation can be assessed according to their ability to exercise power through selective legislative tasks.*'

With these primary research findings, we intend to make a brief comparative study with Norway and Bangladesh in next chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONTEXTUALIZING THE RESULTS: WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN NORWAY AND BANGLADESH

Bangladesh and Norway have little in common. Bangladesh is a nation with little experience of development and democracy, moulded by strong patriarchal values and predominantly Islamic religious doctrines. On the other hand, Norway, a developed and old established democratic country, is well recognised for its egalitarian culture, while the state religion of the country is Christianity. Despite these fundamental differences, both of these nations have produced women Prime Ministers on a number of occasions. Four indicators comprising select committee and cabinet positions; speaking ability and overall reputation have been used to assess the effectiveness of women MPs' in New Zealand but it may not be feasible to compare all four determinants with Norway and Bangladesh. Nevertheless, an assessment of the speaking ability, physical interaction/presence is essential. We therefore, intend to make the points of comparison on the basis of cabinet positions, select committee assignments and overall reputation. Some key discoveries made in New Zealand have also been considered to compare the countries. They are: cultural and religious barriers are no longer great barriers for New Zealand women MPs; the stepping-stones theory does not apply to their leadership pathway; without any forms of affirmative action they have reached numerical critical mass in parliament; they are effective legislative representatives and with few exceptions they are effective in representing women. It is intended to compare the situation of the two countries following the same format that was used for New Zealand. Thus we start with our previous findings that both culture and religion usually have enormous influence on the nature of gender in a particular society.

7.1 Gender in Bangladesh and Norway

Throughout the nineteenth century, cultural and religious barriers affected New Zealand women, and they had to struggle all the way through with very little state intervention. Over time, New Zealand has appeared as one of the most visible secular countries of the world and the influence of its patriarchy has faded. Through primary research it appears that culture and religion matters little these days to the advancement of New Zealand women MPs. For Bangladesh, neither the state nor civil society is structured in a

gender neutral way. The traditional society is saturated with patriarchal values and norms of female subordination, obedience and segregation. In contrast, since the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, egalitarian culture has played a vital role over Norway's existing patriarchy. Unlike other societies, women in Norway did not face any strong cultural resistance to their advancement due to the passion for equality irrespective of gender.

For Bangladesh, religion was the basis of its existence. In 1947, the British rulers in India and India's prominent leaders divided India into two parts; India and Pakistan. On the basis of majorities of Muslim populations, Pakistan was composed of East and West wings although geographically these two wings were hundreds of miles apart. During 1947-1971, the East Pakistan era, which preceded the foundation of Bangladesh, religion became an indispensable part of life and a dominant determinant in women's lives. Soon after the partition in 1947, enlightened Hindus left the Eastern part of Pakistan and the fanatical religious Muslim League government tried to close down all girls' schools across Pakistan (Falguni, 1995, p. 21). At independence in 1971, the new country Bangladesh emphasised its Bengali character and adopted the trappings of a secular state. That new era from 1972 appears as relatively liberal for women. Secularism was proclaimed as one of the fundamental principles of the new constitution of the country. But two subsequent military coups in 1975 and 1981 changed the situation. The first coup leader started the process of de-secularising the state by deleting the principle of secularism and replacing it by absolute trust and faith in the Almighty Allah in 1977. The second coup d'état continued the process and declared Islam as the state religion in 1988. In return, the recognition of Islam as state religion, and constitutional amendments, encouraged the rise of fundamentalism in the country. Critics argued that the military leaders followed the religious line to show their loyalty to Middle Eastern Muslim Ummah was an attempt to seek the petrodollar of the Middle East (Falguni, 1995; Guhathakurta and Begum, 1995).

In the socialisation process, girls face discrimination from their birth in Bangladesh.¹ The tradition of placing a higher value on male offspring has a strong correlation with the Islamic law which makes it obligatory for a son to be responsible for the care of a poor mother and thus prescribes sons' shares of property to be double that of the

¹ A new bride is usually blessed by the elders to have a baby boy. As soon as the boy is born, *Azan* or a call for prayer is broadcast. But this is not the custom in the case of a girl. See Nath 1981, p. 15.

daughters. Thus, religious law indirectly poses a threat to control of the country's population.² Irrespective of religion, preferential treatment continues in favour of boys by giving them more food and better medical attention while girls are denied equal nutrition and health care in poor families. Islam (2000b) refers to a 1996 UN study, which showed that the mortality rate for girls between the age of one and four years, was nearly twice that for boys in the same age group. Girls are treated as liabilities by parents and are taught to be tolerant and obedient particularly to their husband's house as if they are born only for marriage. In fact, marriage is almost universal in Bangladesh and this cultural prejudice brings shame to a family having adult unmarried daughters. Therefore, from puberty to marriage the girl is under intense pressure by the feeling of becoming a burden to her parents, as she is encouraged to get married as soon as possible.³

For the majority Muslim population of Bangladesh, Islam plays a vital role in formulating everyday customs of the society. The dress code *purdah* for women is most visible among them. By the ideology of conforming to *purdah*, women bring good reputation and honour for families. Also a majority of rural women are convinced that *purdah* has to be conformed to for the well-being of their families and discarding this is a sin against religion (Naved, 1994; Rahman, 1994). Overall, the people's stereotypical attitude and belief about *purdah* is that those who wear it are modest, gentle and passive and rather than aggressive. This religious custom *purdah* is incorporated into culture which legitimises the exclusion of women from public spaces. Cultural norms become difficult hurdles when mixed with religion and sometimes it is even harder to separate what comes from culture and what from religion. For example, the ideology of Islam is reinforced by the cultural context and manifested in the institution of women's seclusion with *purdah*. Strongly devoted *purdah* followers usually wear a '*borkha*' by which they can cover their whole body. However, a majority of both Muslim and Hindu women in Bangladesh follow *purdah* by covering their heads with *sari* (daily wear clothes for women). Irrespective of religion, the practice of *purdah* remains everywhere in the society such as in celebrations and gatherings, and transport seating arrangements where women are separated from men. This traditional stereotype is still the most desired behaviour from women in the Indian

² In rural areas, women usually give birth repeatedly in order to have a son from the perception that sons are better economic assets for security in old age. See Hamid, 1996.

³ While an unmarried educated earning woman brings disrepute to the parents, no such stigma is attached to an unmarried man. See Islam, 1994.

subcontinent by both men and women. To avoid character assassination and innuendo that can damage a political career, women leaders conform to *purdah* in public, at least symbolically.⁴ As religion is almost universal in Bangladesh, the major religious denominations listed in Table 7.1 are a reflection of how the different religious norms affect the women community.

Table 7.1. Religious denominations in Bangladesh⁵

Muslim	88.3%
Hindu	10.5%
Buddhist	0.6%
Christian, Animists and believers in tribal faiths	0.3%

Islamic ideologies also stress a strong patriarchy that provides men with authority and domination over women. The seclusion of women to the domestic sphere creates women's dependence and subordination to men and marginalises women's social status. Chowdhury's (1994a, p. 94) interpretation of the linkage of *purdah*, patriarchy and gender relations is noteworthy:

Purdah is a manifestation of the male proprietary approach to gender relations that is inherent in patriarchy.

Female chastity and morality get the top priority in every day gender relations in Bangladesh. This is not only limited to *purdah*. The more the women remain in the private sphere, the more it is an indication of women's purity. Some people erroneously indicate the involvement of 1.2 million⁶ women garment workers in Bangladesh as a symbol of development and therefore, deny the influence of *purdah*. Perhaps *purdah* has been compromised to some extent due to poverty because a large number of poor women have taken jobs due to a need for outside income. This situation however, does not correlate with improved gender roles in society; rather society sees it as filling women's economic needs. Very poor women have no choice but to work, for their poverty has pushed them to seek income outside the home. People accept such behaviour when the necessity for it is apparent and do not make it a matter for shame. This situation is appropriately described as "the pain of hunger pushed away their veil" (Jiggins, 1994, p. 113). Fundamentalists however, are opposed to women's education,

⁴ For details how *purdah* affects everyday life of women in Bangladesh, See Chowdhury, 1994a, pp. 92-113.

⁵ See the Country Profile Bangladesh 2002 at <http://www.chetona.com/home/Bangladesh.html>

⁶ See Westfall, 1996.

employment and the micro-credit programme of NGOs. While NGO workers are helping to educate women, they have been attacked by the Muslim fundamentalists allegedly for propagating Christianity. A vast number of NGO workers are women. This kind of community educational work needs a door-to-door movement but mullahs often describe those women involved as 'fallen women'.⁷ There are claims that ulemas and maulanas, who are known to be religious opinion leaders, interpret religious doctrines rigidly against women and relegate women to a subordinate status. Therefore, to Husain (1995, p. 39) religion in Bangladesh is the "most misperceived and misapplied with ulterior motives." In a patriarchal society the fanatics' clever appeal seems to attract people when they advocate not dragging the mother and sister out of the home but instead employing the unemployed fathers and husbands (Chowdhury, 1994a; Falguni, 1995). A recent discovery indicates that millions of Bangladeshi women have never had the experience of voting in any election due to *fatwa* (a binding religious opinion) that voting involves women's public interaction. During the last 3-4 years, government and several NGOs have taken the initiative to teach these women how to vote and for the first time thousands of women cast their votes in the 2001 general election.⁸ The increasing danger of *fatwa* compelled the Bangladesh High Court to proclaim a ruling against village religious leaders in late 2000.

However, it is not only the religious clerics and fanatics who hinder women's public life involvement; society itself finds it difficult to accept women on their own. Independent working women, especially those who work late at night, are often accused of being bad characters and onlookers frequently restrict their mobility. One of these, a self-employed student-cum-worker, Simi, committed suicide on 23 December 2001. Her crime was simply working late hours and leading an independent life, which is not socially sanctioned for women. For months she had been undergoing abuse from local hooligans led by a group of young men backed by the neighbourhood elders. Systematic and brutal verbal character assassination led her to slap one of these hooligans. This was considered as a direct threat against the existing male authority of the society. Her acts forced her parents to receive a delegation of righteous neighbours and law enforcers who threatened her family and demanded that Simi should behave according to the accepted code. Here the accepted code is to obey the male. Even the

⁷ See Bornstein, 1996, p. 186; Also see the Country Profile Bangladesh, 1995-96, p. 8.

⁸ *Fatwa* declared by one Peer (religious cleric) debarred women from voting in three localities for the last 45 years. This scenario can also be found in many places of the country. See *The Daily Ittefaq*, 21 September, 2001b.

concerned policeman ordered her and her family to obey male rule. This destroyed her spirit, and she decided that death was her only escape from the 'patriarchal collusion' (Siddiqi, 2002, p. 5). She described her assault as 'worse than being raped'.⁹

In terms of power relations between genders, a very asymmetrical interdependence exists in the family. Men have the sole authority for decision-making and women are regarded as highly dependent partners. This hierarchy in the family is related to the breadwinning status of men. The customary division of labour, resources, and responsibilities place women and men differently and unequally.¹⁰ Bangladesh has one of the highest battered women rates in the world. The recently released statistics of UNFPA's State of World Population reports that male partners physically assault 47% of women in Bangladesh. That puts the country second after Papua New Guinea among a dozen countries where women bashing is common.¹¹ This pervasive repression of women is an indication of a deeper social ailment and is thought to be an outcome of women's sole dependence on men.¹²

Strong patriarchal culture not only gives the sole authority to men over women, but until recently, children were recognised by their father only – mothers had no legal standing as a guardian. The previous woman Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina took a radical step in the year 2000. It is now mandatory to put the mother's name along with the father in birth registration and school certificates of children. Also a number of other documents like voter identification and passport will also have to carry the name of the mother. The conservative Islamic groups were infuriated and claimed that this would bring social disorder by undermining the institution of marriage. They argued that this provision would encourage young people to live together without getting married (Islam, 2000b).

Officially, the country recognises women's equal rights through its constitution but legal discrimination against women exists through the religious laws relating to

⁹ Her suicide was the outcome of cultural constructions of honor and shame and she got rid of the pain of that cultural shame for her parents and family, which she described in a small note before her death. See Chowdhury, 2002 and *The Daily Star*, 8 January 2002.

¹⁰ See Kabeer, 1998.

¹¹ See the State of World Population, UN Population Fund (UNFPA), 2000.

¹² It is suggested that the situation can only be improved by the advancement of womenfolk in areas of employment or economic self-reliance because the incidence of beating is the highest amongst the illiterate people. See *The Daily Star*, 22 September, 2000; Kabir, 2000.

marriage, divorce, child custody and property inheritance. For example, according to Muslim family law, a daughter is entitled to only half a son's share of the father's property. However, with a few exceptions women surrender their inheritance as a matter of custom thereby showing love for their brothers; depriving brothers of this source of income might antagonise them. A Hindu woman does not have any inheritance right to family property so at the time of the wedding her father has to provide everything for the household of the new bride including money and ornaments, which is truly a 'dowry'. A father who cannot afford a dowry fails to find a suitable match for his daughter. The Christians have equal property rights but their small proportion in the country's population does not create any significant impact.

Bangladeshi women's secondary status is also known internationally. Although Bangladesh is a signatory and has ratified the CEDAW, it reserved the Articles concerning women's equal rights in the family which is controversial and militates against achieving gender equality. The country thus limited its objective of equality in the public domain. Though many NGOs in Bangladesh have been quite successful in demonstrating the efficacy of empowerment approaches, the official statements on women did not embrace the term. Religious laws seem to be the main sources of inequality and discrimination between sexes and inferiority in personal rights have sanctified women's secondary status.¹³ Gender discrimination and inequities are deeply embedded in the socio-economic structures and to some extent they are legalised. While articles 27 and 28 of the Bangladesh Constitution state that all citizens are equal before the law and the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, laws relating to citizenship are discriminatory against women. For instance, the 1951 Citizenship Act restricted Bangladeshi women from extending their nationality to foreign husbands but the same law did not apply to men (Islam, 2001). The latest Human Development Report placed Bangladesh in 132nd position in GEM among 162 nations.¹⁴

Both the Prime Minister and the Opposition Leader of the country are women but no other areas including parliamentary representation show any significant sign of women's advancement. Also it will be seen that this unusual advancement of two

¹³ See the Report of the Task Forces on Bangladesh Development Strategies for the 1990s, Vol.1 (1991), p. 357; Jahan, 1995; Kamal, 1995. Also see IDEA for the State of Democracy, 2001.

¹⁴ See the UN Human Development Report, 2001.

women occurred only because they have not achieved their positions in their own right, rather they are accidental leaders. They do not fit the existing cultural pattern of the country. The visibility of a few women in the public arena can be seen as a little dynamism of culture but the everyday male female relationship remains largely unchanged, following the country's conservative ancestry and patriarchy. Moreover, the Islamic religious doctrines play a crucial role in nourishing the conservative nature of the culture. Overall, the advocacy of gender issues has been seen as a 'win/lose' scenario, rather than societal advancement. Women's gains have been evaluated as men's losses (Jahan, 1995, p. 128).

While Bangladesh is a traditional society in gender relations, the Christian nation Norway is consistently among the most secular societies in moral and ethical values and is also the most favourable in gender equality. Although the Evangelical-Lutheran religion is the official religion of the state, Article 2 of the Norwegian Constitution declares that everybody shall have the right to free exercise of their religion (Bø, 1995). Norway is a constitutional monarchy combined with parliamentarianism. A constitutional monarchy means that the monarch is head of state, but has no real power. The power lies in the parliament, which again is elected by the people. Essentially, the people decide who rules the nation, and the Monarch's rights and duties are stated in the constitution.¹⁵ However, the ceremonial position of the King allocated limited power, although the king is also the head of the state church. Bø (1995, p. 2) has given a brief account of the relation between state and church. The debate about the relation between church and state started seriously in the 1850s when the Church had such enormous power that people even addressed the state as the 'Church's state'. Due to the establishment of a parliamentary system in 1884 power shifted gradually to the state. Today, the Church generally governs only itself. However, Norway is one of the countries in the world with the most active Christian population. The politicians therefore, cannot entirely ignore the Church as it bears considerable voter potential. A 1995 survey showed that 918 Norwegian missionaries were working in 69 different countries around the world under the umbrella of the state church. The Evangelical Lutheran group constitutes by far the highest percentage of the population (see table).

¹⁵ See Ros, 1994 and also see the Norwegian Parliament at www.stortinget.no/info/eng/engpag.htm

Table 7.2. Major religious denominations in Norway¹⁶

Evangelical Lutheran (state church)	86%
Protestant and Roman Catholic	3%
Other	1%
None and unknown	10%

As head of the Church, throughout the decades, kings played a vital role in appointing religious personnel. The appointment of women was most controversial among them. In fact, women's advancement was not smooth initially from the religious viewpoint. The debate on the Bible's prescription of separate task allocation between men and women reached a peak in Norway in the 1950s. Both the Lutheran and Catholic churches raised opposition on the question of women's right to become ministers. Controversy developed again in 1961 when King Olav V appointed the first woman priest. In the 1970s, many people resigned from the Church, considering themselves non-Christians. On the other hand some resigned from the feeling that the Church of Norway was not Christian enough. For instance, a bishop resigned along with some priests in protest at the liberal abortion law passed by the Storting in 1978. However, all kinds of sex role differentiation based on religious doctrines were partly obscured by secularisation (Holter, 1970, p. 27). The extent of change can be gauged from the fact that King Harald V appointed the country's first female bishop in 1993.

Similar to other countries, in the past Norwegian women saw their primary role as childbearers, and until the start of industrialisation in the nineteenth century, women were submissive to men. The struggle for women's emancipation in public life started in the nineteenth century. They acquired inheritance rights in 1854 but until the 1890s married women could not gain the right to control their own wealth. In 1882 women were given access to higher education and by 1912 many women had joined the work force as secretaries, teachers and industrial workers. Although industrialisation gave women new opportunities in the cities, the female factory workers had a hard life experiencing extremely long hours, poor working environment and very low wages. Equal pay was an unfamiliar regulation and Mørkhagen (2002, p. 4) demonstrated that while an errand boy earned an average of 290 kroner a year, for a maid it was 151 kroner. However, towards the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century,

¹⁶ See The World Factbook, 2001.

working class women began to organise. The female matchstick workers organised first and various unions gradually helped in improving the unsatisfactory working conditions of the female work force.

Following the international perspectives of women's studies, until the 1980s, most Scandinavian women's studies scholars termed their states as 'patriarchal'. Norway is still a patriarchal society in the sense that men traditionally have been the household heads. It is surprising however, that patriarchy and women's self-sufficient roles co-existed in Norway. How does it happen? The gradual emergence of a 'state-friendly' Norway deserves some explanation. The historic position of small, homogeneous Nordic countries towards equality and social justice made women's claims legitimate unlike in most other countries. Governments were usually responsive to the needs of women. Government interventions through specific policies helped to portray women's basic individual and citizen's rights beginning in the 1930s. As government started to promote women's interests and the individual freedom of women, the terminology turned from 'state-friendly' into a 'women-friendly society' (Bystydzienski, 1994, p. 56; Karvonen and Selle, 1995, p. 11; Solheim, 2000, p. 66).

The co-existence of patriarchy and egalitarianism in Norway is still an unresolved question but strong egalitarianism somehow outweighs the patriarchy. Norway's dynamism and malleability of culture followed by the gradual industrialisation of the country. The demographic changes become visible on different fronts of women's advancement in cultural, economic and educational levels. However, despite remarkable achievement in several sectors, women maintain caution in addressing Norway as an equal state. Mørkhagen's assertion about today's Norwegian culture is noteworthy where traditional patriarchy is less visible:

We live in a culture where women have a prominent position and where the general attitude is that nothing that is possible for a man is impossible for a woman. Other cultures may even perceive Norwegian women as being somewhat mannish due to their open and direct way of dealing with others. At the same time our enlightened and equalized society has a flip-side, and that is that even though women have broken every barrier and entered every male bastion, the work women do is on the whole not valued as highly as the man's (Mørkhagen, 2002, p. 10).

A culture of cooperation became visible between the state and the society from the late 1960s. Besides the implementation of a Gender Equality Act in 1978, a long tradition of government intervention to promote social equality may have made the public more

receptive to equality for women in Norway. Lately, the establishment of a special Gender Equality Ombud was the first of its kind and has made Norway known throughout the world as a country that values gender equality. The Gender Equality Ombud is responsible for overseeing the proper enforcement of the Gender Equality Act. It is worth noting that Norway tops the list in the GEM. Since the 1980s, Norway's changing governments have always consisted of almost 50% women. In 1998, the president of the Storting who is second in rank and status in the country, the commissioner of the Oslo Police, the president of the University of Oslo and the governor of Svalbard in Norway's arctic Far North were all women (Mørkhagen, 2002).

The discussion on gender opens up two different dimensions of the construction of gender in Bangladesh and Norway. A third dimension is identified when the findings are compared with New Zealand. In all three cases the influence of culture and religion appeared to be important in the foundation of gender. Bangladesh is a highly patriarchal society and the state religion Islam made patriarchy even harder to overcome. Both state and society remain important factors in bringing any substantial change to gender relations. Norwegian women, however, despite the country's strong Christian influence, faced very few barriers. The passion for equality is reflected throughout the society, state in particular (Wängnerud, 2000). The co-existence of egalitarianism and patriarchy is rare in its nature. Although New Zealand is a liberal society and patriarchy is fading out, the country has yet to earn the status of a 'women-friendly society'. However, culture is not a direct barrier and people believe in equality. Religious practice is low but the influence of Christianity is still evident.

The relative position of the three countries in the GEM list is an indication of differences in women's status. Among 162 nations, Norway is first, New Zealand 19th and Bangladesh 132nd. These positions indicate that Bangladeshi women lag far behind the first two. It is even difficult to compare their position with nineteenth century Norwegian and New Zealand women. According to Norris and Inglehart (2000) cultural dynamism occurs with modernisation and industrialisation. Both Norway and New Zealand appeared to have been benefited through cultural dynamism. But in the case of Bangladesh due to slow modernisation and industrialisation, a small change occurred only at the level of women's social mobility, education and work force participation. Women's position in relation to men however, remains rigid where hierarchy is maintained. Power therefore, is still an outreach element for women in

Bangladesh. Thus both culture and religion have a significant impact on Bangladeshi women's political effectiveness and this supports the sub hypothesis that in that country, at least, *'cultural and religious norms have a significant impact on women's political effectiveness.'*

7.2 Women's effective representation

Although the parliamentary culture has not changed, with 30.8% parliamentary representation, New Zealand women MPs numerically have reached the critical mass stage. Most of them are effective in their parliamentary duties and responsibilities. In the current 2002 parliament, Bangladesh has got only 2% women while Norway has 36.4%. In the previous parliament, Bangladesh had 11.21% women's representation, which was the highest proportion of women ever in the parliament in the country's history. This earlier parliament 1996-2001 is chosen for comparison with Norway because it is more typical of the normal level of women's representation in the Bangladesh parliament. In addition, the parliament 2001-2003 is chosen for the Norwegian parliament as most of the required information available about women MPs is for this period.¹⁷ Previously, we formulated a framework where we found different sources of power make women MPs effective and influential. The same framework is used here to assess the effectiveness of women MPs in Bangladesh and Norway.

7.2.1 Sources of individual power (resource/position/expert)

Legislators exercise a substantial amount of individual power through select/standing committees and New Zealand women MPs have demonstrated that. The Bangladesh parliament is composed of 330 members and examining the standing committee positions of women MPs in the 1996-2001 period, 37 women MPs were found almost uniformly distributed in 40 different committees. There was no tendency to place women into social welfare and health committees only, rather, to maintain tokenism, they were placed in every committee irrespective of their personal background. By maintaining tokenism in committee distribution they were able to avoid the stereotyping of working in 'soft' areas. No woman MP was made chairperson of any committee.¹⁸

¹⁷ It may seem illogical to include the period 2003 of Norwegian parliament as this research project ends at the end of the year 2002. In fact, both Norway and Bangladesh are our secondary countries and we have no intention to compare every single element of New Zealand parliament to these two countries. The key points we have decided to compare are possible to find out by the year 2002.

¹⁸ See the select committee distribution chart, Bangladesh Parliament, 2000.

The Norwegian parliament, the Storting is composed of 165 members. Matthews and Valen (1999, p. 167) found no statistically significant relationship between male female distribution among committees. Despite that, the general trend is more male MPs are found in the foreign affairs, agriculture, local government, defence, communications and industry committees. On the other hand, education, social affairs, fisheries and administration are female dominated. However, an examination of all twelve parliamentary standing committees that were formed for the 2001-2003 session, shows that among 61 women MPs, five are chairpersons, of family/culture, finance, defence, local government, scrutiny and constitutional affairs committees. More surprisingly, both the leaders and deputy leaders of the finance and defence committees are women. Among other committees such as energy, justice, education/research/church affairs, business and industry, transport and communication, health and social affairs and foreign affairs women are fairly distributed in terms of their 36.4% parliamentary representation.¹⁹ No tendency to place women into softer committees has been found in the Norwegian case. By holding about 50% of the positions of chairpersons it is evident that they exercise a substantial amount of whatever resource power the committees provide, which resembles New Zealand women MPs.

Including the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, four women ministers served during the period of 1996-2001, which was 7.55% of the total cabinet members. Defence, agriculture, social welfare and women and children's affairs ministries were allocated to women. In contrast, for Norway appointing women on an equal basis started with the government of the country's first ever woman Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland in 1981. Following the 40% quota rule for women in political parties, she appointed eight female ministers out of a total of eighteen. In another of her governments, she had as many as nine women and 10 men. Since then, although government and ruling parties have changed, the practice of appointing at least 40% female ministers is still followed today (Bystydzienski, 1992b; Raaum, 1995; Solheim, 2000). In the last 1999-2001 centrist coalition government eight out of 17 ministers were women. Among others, women occupied the top posts at the ministries of petroleum and energy, justice and agriculture. In the year 2002 there are eleven male ministers (58%) and eight female ministers (42%). In addition to the ministry of defence, women held children & family affairs, culture & church affairs, education & research and international

¹⁹ For the standing committee composition of women MPs of Norway see the Norwegian Parliament at <http://www.stortinget.no/representantene/komiteer.html#DUTENR>.

development.²⁰ As in Norway, New Zealand women's holding of 44% cabinet positions is an indication of their power and effectiveness.

The allocation of the defence ministry among women ministers in Bangladesh may not be for the same reason as in Norway. Both the previous and current women Prime Ministers of Bangladesh held the defence portfolio without defence or any other portfolio background. There are countries where democratic governments remain under constant threat of a military coup as in Bangladesh and Pakistan. Since the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, seven consecutive governments, both democratic and military, have kept the defence ministry in the control of heads of state. Despite that fact, the first two Presidents were killed in subsequent coups. Nevertheless, sometimes chief executives for their own survival keep the defence portfolio. They tend to ensure their personal safety and power by allocating more resources and material benefits to the defence forces.²¹

This reminds us of the theory of stepping-stones where Reynolds used the phrases of hardness and softness of portfolios. We demonstrated earlier that none of the past and present chief executives of the three countries Bangladesh, Norway and New Zealand had served in the so-called harder portfolios in their advancement to the top. Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh were housewives, familial ties were their passage to political power. Gro Harlem Brundtland of Norway held the environment portfolio, which is not a 'hard' portfolio. During the tragic fire on an oil platform in 1977 Brundtland handled the situation very effectively and lifted this little known environment portfolio to the mainstream political arena (Solheim, 2000, p. 69). Similarly, both Jenny Shipley and Helen Clark of New Zealand held labour, health, social welfare portfolios which are so-called 'soft' categories. While the stepping-stones theory does not apply to these leaders, another criterion seems to be common for them. All of them were party and/or parliamentary party chiefs, which appeared to be an important stepping-stone for them.

Bangladesh is an agriculture-based developing country, so the agriculture ministry is one of the largest ministries. Matia Chowdhury, a renowned woman MP was given this ministry. With her co-ordination, leadership and persuasion, she proved herself an

²⁰ See the Norwegian Parliament at www.stortinget.no/info/eng/engpag.htm

²¹ See Kabir, 1999; Ratnayake, 1999; Library of Congress Country Studies - Bangladesh, 2001.

effective cabinet minister by contributing to bumper rice production in four consecutive seasons. Thus the country attained self-sufficiency in food for the first time. For a poor nation, this success is huge. Except for the ministry of women and children's affairs, Bangladesh did not follow the global trend of appointing women to the cabinet portfolios of health, education and cultural affairs and until now no women have been appointed. These ministries are recognised as powerful as those of home and foreign affairs. This reminds us that the socio-economic condition of the country is a determinant of the importance of portfolios. However, the limited women's presence in the political arena is not sufficient to determine any significant trend in the holding of cabinet portfolios and no particular stepping-stones have appeared crucial.

Norway has a tradition of maintaining a fair and equal representation of men and women in cabinet positions. Portfolio allocation does not show any bias to softer or harder portfolios towards women and men respectively. Also, the softer connotation of the social welfare portfolio does not apply to Norway. In fact, the social welfare portfolio is a matter of great attraction in Norway as it controls one-third of the country's national budget (CNN, 2000). Furthermore, the so-called softer issues require position power. For instance, one of the former women ministers of Norway explained that although she worked on child care reforms at a local government level for years, she failed to bring the expected change. But once she got a position in the cabinet her position allowed her to achieve her goal.²² By holding of diversified cabinet positions, women MPs exercise position power that makes them effective legislators as in New Zealand.

Earlier we also considered local government involvement as one of the stepping-stones for women towards parliaments. A substantial number of New Zealand women MPs had a local government background and they stated how they had benefited from those positions. Bangladesh has three tiers of local government but none of the women MPs have had local government experience at any of these levels. That may be another reason why women MPs are less effective in the parliament lacking any prior leadership experience. Working with local government bodies seems to be a distinct stepping-stone for Norwegian women MPs. In the autumn 1995 local elections, women were elected to nearly 33% of the municipal council seats, and 41.2% of the county council

²² See Solheim, 2000, p. 75.

seats.²³ Both of these figures were record highs. About 70% of the women MPs in the 2002 parliament have had a connection with local government/county councils.²⁴

It is learnt from previous chapters that expert power can be exerted effectively with a good educational and professional background. Both education and labour market participation are prerequisites for women's political or public life activities. If we look at women's situation in the educational system of Bangladesh the poor performance of women can be found throughout the society. The movement for educating Bengali Muslim girls was started at the beginning of the 19th century by a few modernist Muslim young men when they found Muslim women were disadvantaged compared to Hindu and Western women. Rokeya Sakhawat Husain, a dedicated feminist in 1911 founded the first Muslim girls' school. However, although these days government has taken a few steps in favour of girls' free education at primary and secondary school levels, attending mosques for religious teachings is often all the education that a rural girl child receives (Hamid, 1996). One recent survey shows that while the attendance of girls in primary school is equal to that of boys, it is 1/3rd in secondary and 1/4th in higher secondary levels. Girls who can sign their names are below 40% of the boys of over 15 years of age. Overall the literacy rate of women in the country is 24.2% against the 45% rate of men.²⁵

The biographies of Bangladesh's MPs show that among the 37 women MPs in the 1996-2001 parliament, 37.8% had a university degree. It is noteworthy that the highest percentages (46%) of these women MPs were housewives. Therefore, women MPs with little education who were housewives were frequently allocated to science and technology, finance, foreign affairs, home, fisheries and livestock and similar standing committees. Other than maintaining tokenism these women MPs were not formally qualified to exercise any expert power. In contrast, more than 90% of male MPs had a university degree.

Education is identified as one of the vital contributing factors responsible for the progress in gender equality over the past two decades in Norway. The literacy rate of

²³ See Mørkhagen, 2002, p. 3.

²⁴ For the biographies of women MPs of 2001-03 tenure see the Norwegian Parliament at <http://www.stortinget.no/representantene/biografier.html>.

²⁵ Many parents think it is useless to educate daughters, and marriages get priority over education. See Rahman, 2001; Riaz, 2001.

Norway is 100%, and over 50% of the students embarking on higher education at the universities and colleges in Norway are girls.²⁶ Education for all is a basic principle of Norwegian educational policy. Wherever they live in the country, all girls and boys must have an equal right to education, regardless of social and cultural background. All public education in Norway is free up to the upper secondary level. Increasing numbers of young Norwegian women are obtaining professional degrees. However, as in New Zealand, young women still tend to choose along traditional lines when selecting their branch of study. For several decades the authorities have tried to encourage young people, especially women, to pursue an education in stereotypical male-dominated professions. In some areas these campaigns have been successful. A good balance has been achieved in recent years, for instance among medical and dentistry students. More than 70% of women MPs of the 2001-2003 Norwegian parliament have a university degree.²⁷ It is observed that their standing committee allocation is based on their previous background, which has enabled them to exercise expert power.

Another recognised source of expert power is professional background. Bangladeshi women's poor educational achievement explains their poor performance and representation in the job market. However, most qualified women are interested in developing a professional career, but they are underrepresented in government jobs, making up less than one-tenth of the about one million government employees. Only one of the 51 government ministries is headed by a woman civil servant. There are only two women among the nation's over 300 senior bureaucrats (Islam, 2000a). There is a provision for a 10% employment quota for women, which is applicable for all government and corporations, but this job quota for women is rarely filled due to employers' negative attitudes, which undermine women's capability and potential.²⁸ Khan (1993) argued that the rationale behind quotas for women was perhaps the fact that in a patriarchal structure, the need for a woman to get a job was always considered a low priority compared to her male counterpart. Therefore, even with the requisite

²⁶ See the Ministry of Education and Research of Norway web page at <http://odin.dep.no/ufd/engelsk/education/014081-120036/index-dok000-b-n-a.html>

²⁷ For the biographies of women MPs in Norwegian Storting 2001-03 see <http://www.stortinget.no/representantene/biografier.html>.

²⁸ Although women's representation in government positions is close to 10%, in semi-government enterprises, banks and corporations this representation is around 5%. This is because the Public Service Commission (PSC) does the recruitment for civil service cadre jobs, while individual employers recruit women for other bodies. See *The Daily Janakantha*, 16 October 2001.

qualifications, a woman often fails to get her due share in a highly competitive and male biased job market.

Among the 37 women MPs of the 1996-2001 parliament, the following categories of background have been found.

Table 7.3. Background of women MPs in the Bangladesh parliament²⁹

Category	Number	Percentage
Housewives	17	45.9
Teacher	12	32.4
Business	4	10.8
Other professional occupation	3	8.1
Professional politician	1	2.7

Women's poor educational and professional achievement is another area of disappointment, partly explaining why women MPs in Bangladesh cannot exert expert power effectively. The global trend of more women often with teaching backgrounds became true for Bangladesh. On the other hand, only three women MPs have been found with a law degree of whom one was practising law as a profession. Political apprenticeship was rarely found among women MPs; only 2.7% took politics as their profession.

For Norway, the gender gap in wage earnings is still a concern to researchers. Mørkhaugen (2002, p. 8) referred to the 1996 Living Conditions survey which revealed that many women work part-time, primarily to take care of their home and family. The average hourly wage of women in Norway was 21% lower than men. While women worked an average of nearly 30 hours a week, the average Norwegian man had a workweek of 38 hours. The labour market of Norway is a reflection of gender division, by the fact that women have traditionally chosen to educate themselves within the caring professions, whereas men have acquired economic or technical skills. The job market is not organised only along the lines of sex, but the education chosen by women leads to low-paying jobs, whereas the jobs men take yield higher wages and prestige. For example, a woman with three years of education as a nurse earns substantially less than a man with a three-year technical education. There are few occupations where an equal number of men and women are employed. Women still have a tendency to choose the traditional occupations, like nursing and teaching. Numbers from Statistics

²⁹ For the biographies of women MPs see the Bangladesh Parliament 1996-2001.

Norway³⁰ shows that the three largest occupational groups are still dominated by women. For example, health and social work (over 80%), other services (almost 70%) and education (over 60%).

Central government figures also indicate some concerns. Full-time women employees make up 44% of the civil service. Yet when it comes to the top echelon, women are not well represented. In 1998, there was only one woman among 17 Secretary Generals and just 17 Directors Generals out of a field of 111. There are only a handful of women in leading positions in Norwegian business and industry, despite the fact that women make up nearly half the work force. Only 3.5% of the top executives of Norwegian corporations are women. On the other hand, the gender balance in politically appointed ministerial posts has gradually improved: of 29 State Secretaries, nine are women.³¹

Why is this so? Researchers, such as Mørkhagen (2002), who have undertaken studies on women have tried to explain why women have achieved such a clear position in politics and ministry posts while remaining conspicuously absent from positions of power in working life. Men, and in particular men who are themselves in leading jobs and who recruit new leaders, tend to explain this situation in terms of a shortage of qualified women willing to take on such work. They complain that there are not only too few women with the right qualifications, but that those suitable as candidates for the top jobs are reluctant to assume positions of power. Women's indifference to undertaking technical education is an indication of why qualified women are not found for high positions.

But this is not always the case that women are reluctant to take high positions. A recent study of the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry shows that 82% university educated women believe that it is more difficult for women than men to land executive positions because male executives are reluctant to hire women for top jobs. While women are blamed for lack of requisite qualifications it is evident that formal qualifications are not the only concern. Employers consider applicant's personal suitability, network of contacts and involvement in the community. When well-qualified women are passed over, their exclusion is often explained in vague terms such

³⁰ See Statistics Norway 2002 at <http://www.ssb.no/english>

³¹ For detail statistical information see Mørkhagen, 2002.

as, "she wasn't suited for the job", "she lacks experience as a leader", and the like (Mørkhagen, 2002, p. 7).

However, while Bangladeshi women are predominantly housewives, the Norwegian welfare state has made it easier for Norwegians to combine work and family life. Therefore, 72% of all women and 83% of all men in Norway have paid work outside the home.³² Backgrounds of Norwegian women MPs show that 38% had teaching and 45% had other professional experience.³³ The professional jobs include journalism, judicial service, executives and other technical jobs. Unlike Bangladesh, no category of housewives has been found in Norway and New Zealand. Similar to New Zealand, Norwegian women MPs are also considered professionals.

7.2.2 Personal power

In theoretical background we found that charisma is an example of personal power. Other than the veteran politician Matia Chowdhury, the word charisma is never used for any other women leaders in Bangladesh. During the mass movement of 1969 an increasing number of female students of Dhaka University started to join student politics and Matia Chowdhury, a veteran female student came out as a 'fire brand daughter of Bengal' for her fearless activities and speeches. In her long political career she has been imprisoned on numerous occasions. Although she took the pathway of insider/climber and had an institutional base in politics, she is widely recognised as a charismatic leader in Bangladesh politics.³⁴ However, including her, women MPs in Bangladesh rarely addressed any issues that affect women and children.

Familial ties are another source of personal power and Bangladesh is an appropriate example of familial political inheritance. The present Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and the Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina filled the political vacuum left by an assassinated husband and father respectively. They followed the power pathway of the Widow's Walk.³⁵ Both of them inherited their influential family tradition in politics, putting an end to their stereotypical role of housewives. Unlike the insiders/climbers category of politicians they had no institutional background in politics. Not only the Prime Minister

³² See the Norwegian Parliament's web page at www.stortinget.no/info/eng/engpag.htm

³³ See the biographies of women MPs in Norwegian Storting 2001-03 at <http://www.stortinget.no/representantene/biografier.html>.

³⁴ See Falguni, 1995, p. 22; for the biography of Matia Chowdhury, see Chowdhury, 2001.

³⁵ See D'Amico, 1995, p. 18.

and the Opposition Leader, but also a significant number of women MPs came through family channels. In the 1996-2001 parliament there were three pairs of husband-wife MPs. During the general election one candidate can run for as many as five seats. Once he/she wins more than one seat, he/she retains one seat and by-elections are held for the other seats. All three couples took this opportunity and their wives contested and won the seat vacated by their husbands in the by-elections. A similar scenario can be found in the current parliament (2001-2006). Three siblings were from the Prime Minister's own family. Her brother was elected through one of her vacant seats and her sister was elected directly. Similarly, the sons of the President and the Finance Minister respectively won a seat vacated by their fathers. Among six women MPs in the current parliament five (83%) have strong family connections.³⁶

One finding of the theoretical framework contradicts the finding of Bangladeshi women MPs' familial origin and exercise of power. Although familial ties are a recognised source of personal power and influence, we learned that this path of political leadership is undermined because those open to accusations of the 'widow's walk', 'appendage syndrome' or 'accidental leader' cannot challenge existing rules due to lack of prior institutional power bases. In addition to these elements, two Bangladeshi leaders appeared to be 'cultural anomalies' given the overall poor representation of women in the parliament. They also led the state within a structure dominated by masculine values that legitimised men's position at the top of hierarchies. They rarely promoted other women MPs to take initiatives or play leadership roles. Although limited personal power is desirable in politics, in addition to legitimate constitutional power, two women leaders of Bangladesh appeared as exceptionally powerful at the personal level. Even as party chiefs they are powerful beyond their genders and usually party loyalists do not betray their leaders. After resuming power in 1996, Sheikh Hasina was praised nationally and internationally for her exemplary step of including the mother's name in children's documents. She also appointed women as Supreme Court Judge, Secretary, Deputy Commissioner, Superintendent of Police as well as to regular commissions into the army, navy and air force to reduce gender disparity in the workplace. Under the women's empowerment programme, her government passed a law of compulsory representation of women in elected local bodies in 1997. A new bill on local government provides for the direct election of women to three seats in the lowest tier of

³⁶ See the biographies of women MPs in Bangladesh Parliament 1996-2001.

local government called the union *parishad* (council). About 1400 elected women are now serving in these local bodies (Raj, 2000, p. 3). On the other hand, with the return of some democratic norms in 1991, the first woman Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Khaleda Zia, failed to promote any genuine welfare for women's advancement. Her rightist Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) did not reverse the policies made by the martial law government earlier. Later, she formed a coalition government with a number of fundamentalist parties, and 50 prominent women activists protested against this move describing her as a disgrace to women folk.³⁷

Sheikh Hasina's proclamation of compulsory use of the mother's name in children's documents was a stunt in a patriarchal context. On the other hand, forming a coalition with fundamentalist Islamic parties indicated Khaleda Zia's intention of retaining power. Khaleda Zia also appeared to be powerful in ignoring the demands of women's organisations on increasing the number of women's seats in the parliament, which was one of her election commitments. This could equally be a sign of her weakness too. As she knows that almost all of her male colleagues are against the policy of increasing women's seats in the parliament, she remains silent on this issue. However, the correlation between familial ties and powerlessness does not fit in the Bangladesh context rather it has opened up a new field of research for another occasion. Too much personal power is not desirable in politics as the theoretical framework suggests but some societies accept it quite liberally. It reminds of Thomas's (2001, p. 25) study on leadership across cultures. The study shows that while Polynesian leaders believe in discipline and conformity; Anglo-European leaders are less formal; leaders in some developing countries seem to be authoritarian. Also their authoritarianism and dominance are more acceptable. This may be one of the explanations of how the Bangladeshi women leaders continue to exercise personal power.

While Bangladeshi women MPs have a tendency to rely upon family connection, no such familial ties seem to be dominant among Norwegian women MPs. There is no significant difference between men and women politicians in terms of skills, toughness and ambition. Women show no different attitudes in conducting economic and foreign policy but are more interested in social issues. For example, in an interview with the political scientist Bruce O. Solheim (2000, p. 58), the former family and children minister Grete Berget claimed that without women's social issue preference Norway

³⁷ See Hensman, 1996, p. 60; *The Daily Ittefaq*, 29 September 2001a.

would not have numerous childcare centres, the best maternity leave policy in Europe and a doubling of the number of kindergartens since 1986. Many men also championed issues of wages, maternity leave, day care and other social reforms. Overall, differences along party lines are more significant than gender lines. Although at the beginning, women's political involvement was based on stereotypes, it did not last long. More experienced women usually take stronger roles on economic and defence policies. With so many different women with different kinds of styles they have proven themselves as effective leaders. To achieve this, a lesson was promoted in Norwegian politics that "women must develop themselves not as a woman stereotype but as leaders themselves."³⁸

It is seen in previous chapters that Helen Clark is very much concerned about women's issues, she encouraged women to widen their areas of interests and appointed the highest number of women to diversified cabinet portfolios in New Zealand parliamentary history. The name Gro Harlem Brundtland comes instantly to mind along with the issue of women in politics in Norway. Seager (1997, p. 125) identified Brundtland as an exceptional head of government who felt responsible and was able to portray and stand for gender issues in ways to speed up the process of change. She was greatly influenced by the feminist movement and along with policies on environment and green issues, has been pro-active in promoting other women's careers (Drage, 1997; Matthews and Valen, 1999). She was in the forefront of Norwegian politics from the early 1970s to 1996. She was appointed as environment minister in 1974 and in 1975 she became the head of the Norwegian Labour Party; the first ever woman head of any political party in Norway. Her influence was so pervasive that the Labour Party led the movement of gaining the membership of the European Community (EC).

During her prime-ministership since 1981, she was considered the leading agent of change in Norwegian politics by promoting the role of women in power. She was tough yet able to show great emotion and even cry in public, a fact Solheim (2000, p. 54) demonstrated is also true for other Norwegian women politicians. As a Labour government headed by a female, Gro Harlem Brundtland faced mounting resentment during her first three years in office. Her appointment of 44% women to cabinet posts

³⁸ Stereotypes are seen as a barrier of effectiveness and there was a fear in Norwegian politics that stereotypical women's issues could divide people in relation to gender besides uniting them. This message was a warning from the Brundtland government. See Solheim, 2000, p. 76.

was also criticised by more conservative parties (Bystydzienski, 1992b, p. 21). It however, attracted international media attention. Her response was that a “natural balance of men and women makes prejudiced decisions less likely and gives the greatest possible breadth of experience.”³⁹ Based on her rising international popularity from 1991 there was a forecast that she would be the UN Secretary General. Although she did not get that position, she holds another powerful position as head of the World Health Organization. From that position, she encouraged other countries to follow Norway for inspiration and ideas on how to promote equality between the sexes (Mørkhagen, 2002).

7.2.3 Sources of group power

Women’s organisations and quotas are recognised sources of group power in politics that has been established earlier. Group power is also a crucial basis of individual power, which is demonstrated in the case of New Zealand by formulating a sub hypothesis that *‘group power is an important basis of an individual power’*. In New Zealand, women’s organisations have been identified as very effective in bringing more women into parliament by raising consciousness. For Bangladesh it is important to look back at the history of the women’s movement in British-India. Women had a glorious past participating in war during the Mughal era (before 1757), in the Congress movement, and struggling for voting rights as well as participating in communist and terrorist movements during the British-India era (1757-1947). The Bengal Women’s Society led the struggle for women’s voting rights, which at first faced a defeat in 1921. But women continued their struggle and gained support from small but organised women’s groups in different district towns. Ultimately the Bengal legislature approved women’s voting rights in 1925 and women first exercised their franchise in 1926.

However, women’s participation decreased under Muslim League rule in the Pakistan era (1947-1971). During this regime, the legendary woman communist leader Ila Mitra suffered inhuman physical and mental torture by the Pakistani Muslim fundamentalist government. During the 1960s the Bengali nationalist movement gained momentum and women were at the forefront of the cultural forces disregarding the Pakistani Islamic rulers. In January 1967 thousands of women wrapped in *Borkha* marched in a mourning procession following the killing of a student who was involved in the independence movement of the country. This unity of women led to the formation of a

³⁹ Quoted in Solheim, 2000, p. 72.

'Women's Action Committee' which later turned into the 'Bangladesh Mahila Parishad' or 'Bangladesh Women's Caucus'. The Bangladesh era from 1971 appears as relatively liberal for the women's movement. In the early 1970s dozens of urban-based women's organisations appeared targeting welfare tasks. These organisations multiplied rapidly and in 1985 more than six hundred women's organisations were registered with the Ministry of Social Welfare. Many of these organisations shifted from welfare to development and their activities expanded to rural areas with various agenda like women's health, education, legal reforms, environmental issues, and opposition to fundamentalism (Jahan, 1995, p. 101; Hensman, 1996, p. 59).

A united force of women's organisations named '*Oikkya Baddha Nari Samaj*' was in the forefront of the pro-democracy movement in 1990. With the rise of the democratic regime, women's organisations and groups got new life. They were successful in lobbying political parties to put forward gender issues in different party platforms but failed to exert enough pressure to translate these issues into action. For example, their demand was to implement an alternative form of reserve seats or quota for women in the political parties so that the parties would nominate a certain percentage of women for direct election. Also they staged protests across the country, demanding direct elections to the reserved seats and an increase of these from 30 to 64 to represent each of the country's 64 administrative districts. But except for adding the issue in their election manifestos, political parties ignored the matter. A significant number of women's organisations started to work under several NGOs' banners but due to their donor-based status, they were not united in their issues. Donors have a tendency to keep a distance from political parties. Critics argue that until women's organisations agree to a common strategy that includes the wider agenda of citizens' demands, women's equal rights will not be established in Bangladesh.⁴⁰ However, in the present political arena it is found that women-focused issues come not from the agenda of any political party but from the women's movement.

Similar to New Zealand, Norway has had a long tradition of well-organised women's groups pressing for gender equality. At the beginning of the nineteenth century an umbrella organisation, the National Council of Women's Organisations, was established in each Nordic country including Norway. These councils were organised on the

⁴⁰ See Jahan, 1995.

principles of equal value and equal status for women in order to establish a power base for them. By 1910, all Norwegian women succeeded in getting the vote in local elections and by 1913 they became enfranchised in parliamentary elections. Unlike woman's rights groups in other Western countries, Norwegian women did not disband after women's suffrage was passed. They have existed continuously since their inception over 100 years ago. They also struggled for increased representation in the public sphere and began to press for electing women into government offices. Starting in the late 1960s through the early 1980s the latest women's movement in Norway managed to bring new issues to the public discourse, which had earlier been regarded as private matters. Quite a large number of top bureaucrats of the central administration, who had connections with women's movements, influenced the overall process of this issue transformation and they were named as 'state feminists' (Ros, 1994, p. 530). Until the 1960s, women were virtually absent from Norwegian corporate committees, boards and councils but due to increased pressure from the women's movement, the percentages began to grow and rose from 7% in 1965 to 27% in 1980 (Bystydziński, 1992b, p. 16). The growing responsiveness of the Norwegian government to the ideas expressed by activist women coincides with the increasing number of women in public offices.

By the early 1980s, the Norwegian women's movement succeeded in not only getting more women into public offices but also incorporating a feminist agenda into the platforms of several political parties. The acceptance of sex quotas by the Liberal, Socialist Left and the Labour Parties, the wording of major portions of the Equal Status Act in favour of women rather than in gender neutral terms, and changes in laws regarding parental leave are just a few examples of feminist influence. The women's movement worked actively with women in different political parties to promote women's access to established institutions of decision-making. Skjeie (1998, p. 184) argued that from the early 1970s the new feminist movement started to work "on the interest of the group based on the collective good, rather than on individual fairness." She added that the ideas on gender-structured interests were able to influence the attitudes of the political elite due to the feminists' clever use of party competition and their well-organised campaigns.

With the increasing number of female politicians toward the end of the 1970s and in the 1980s, there was a shift in the political agenda and policies emerged that clearly put

issues of great concern to women at the forefront. In 1986, for example, maternal leave was drastically increased from 18 weeks to one year with 80% pay or 42 weeks with full pay. Also childcare subsidies have grown, and paid parental leave was increased in 1987 from 16 to 18 weeks.⁴¹ As more women entered into parliament, and county and municipal councils, they made it possible for women's issues, concerns and values to be discussed, debated and legislated more openly and frequently. Many of these women received their political training in the women's movement and were sympathetic to the views and demands of activist women. One recent study of Wängnerud (2000, p. 143) shows that 41% of women MPs have regular contact with women's organisations. According to Skjeie (1998, p. 186), a gradual development of 'care politics' is a distinct feature of Norway where women's influence has been most apparent. Broadly this means the state's responsibilities to provide opportunities for women to combine the obligations of motherhood with the right to economic independence. It includes increases in publicly sponsored childcare services, extensions of the paid parental leave period, options for more flexible work hours through work/time budgeting, improved pension rights for unpaid carework and increased child benefits for families that do not use public childcare services and the right of fathers to share the parental leave period.

By forming inter and cross-party alliances at certain times both within and across political parties, Norwegian women MPs have made a difference, being able to influence change within political agendas as well as decision-making. This impact has been possible as a result of diverse efforts carried out over a long period of time by a large group of people and with close co-ordination and networking with women's organisations. In many respects, the process of change has come through learning the rules and using them within the parties as well as within parliament. Their successful use of the rules of the game brought legitimacy and credibility for themselves.⁴² Thus women MPs have prior organisational experience that helped them to exercise power and influence in their parliamentary life. However, many men are also found who are equally passionate about these issues. It is noteworthy that care politics has now reached the top priority list of most political parties. Therefore, women legislators rarely face any difficulty in addressing women's issues. Their effectiveness both as general legislative representatives and women's representatives is clear.

⁴¹ See the Norwegian Parliament's web page at www.stortinget.no/info/eng/engpag.htm

⁴² See Skjeie, 1998.

Women's organisations in Norway are very active in bringing more women into the parliament. Although the first ever woman Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland was not involved in the Labour Party's women's movement nor did she belong to any of the feminist groups, she was labelled a new feminist. As a Prime Ministerial candidate she was strongly backed by a massive, nation-wide grassroots campaign with letters, telegrams and telephone calls by women (Matthews and Valen, 1999). However, it seems successful women leaders are also aware of the danger of narrowing their issue preference and this reminds us of the hypothesis that *'representing women only may limit women's ability to fulfil their other representative roles'*. Gro Harlem Brundtland called herself a multidimensional leader, saying "women's roles and their chances in life to develop themselves are central to my thinking, but I am not a one-issue person" (Solheim, 2000, p. 74). Overall, Norwegian women politicians want to make a difference but to avoid conflict with their male colleagues they do not act too differently. They want to work along party lines, but emphasise those things that bring unity rather than create division in relation to gender.

From issue involvement to cabinet formation, the Norwegian Prime Minister's direction for other women MPs is exemplary. More than 60% of women MPs in the 2001-2003 Norwegian parliament had connections with women's organisations⁴³. This resembles New Zealand.

Women's groups and networks do not appear to have brought about any substantial increase of women representatives in the Bangladesh parliament as they were found to do in Norway and New Zealand. Only 24% of women MPs in the 1996-2001 parliament had connections with women's organisations, which were mostly in name only and were general welfare organisations.⁴⁴ Women have never united in the parliament to form a women-only caucus to promote women's issues. Party loyalty always got greater priority than any of the gender issues. Both the Prime Minister and the Opposition Leader lacked any background of women's networks. The frustration of women's organisations' echoed from two fronts. Firstly, women's low number in the parliament and secondly, due to the lack of networking experience Bangladeshi women

⁴³ See the biographies of women MPs in Norwegian Storting 2001-03 at <http://www.stortinget.no/representantene/biografier.html>.

⁴⁴ See the biographies of women MPs in Bangladesh Parliament 1996-2001.

MPs failed to address and introduce any 'care politics'. To them, care politics is more humane and an integral part of women's effective representation (Chowdhury, 2000). The sub hypothesis that '*group power is an important basis of an individual power*' is therefore less supportive for Bangladeshi women MPs but highly supportive for women MPs in Norway and New Zealand.

Reserved seats and quotas are another source of group power in parliament. Many nation states used these mechanisms to increase women's number in parliaments and benefited by reaching the critical mass. New Zealand however, is an exception for without any such preferential treatment women reached a significant level of representation in the parliament. Bangladesh is one of the countries that has introduced reserved seats for women. Under its 1972 constitution, an additional 5% i.e., 15 reserved seats were introduced to the 300-member parliament with provision for renewal every 10 years. This 5% was raised to 10% (30 seats) in 1978 and the term extended by two successive constitutional amendments. However, due to a lack of consensus for renewal, women twice missed the opportunity of having reserved seats at the 1988 and 2001 general elections. With reserved seats, women's representation from 1973-1996 averaged around 11% and without reserved seats women's representation reached around only 2%. From 1973 to 2001, a period of 28 years, seven general elections have been held. The following table illustrates the details of women's parliamentary representation in Bangladesh.

Table 7.4. Women's representation in the Bangladesh parliament (1973-2001)⁴⁵

Year of Election	Women candidates among all candidates (%)	Women elected among all elected MPs (%)	Reserved seats for women (%)	Total women in the parliament (%)
1973	0.3	0	5*	4.8
1979	0.9	0.7	10**	9.7
1986	1.3	1.7	10	10.6
1988	0.7	1.3	-	1.3
1991	1.5	1.7	10	10.6
1996	1.4	2.3	10	11.2
2001	1.9	2	-	2

*In 1973, the reserved seat was 5%, ** From 1979 onwards it was 10%.

⁴⁵ Compiled from Nazmunnessa Mahtab, 'Women in Politics: Bangladesh Perspective', a paper presented in the international seminar on Women in Politics, Dhaka, Bangladesh, October 9-10, 2000, p. 5-6 and also 2001 general election results consulted.

The table indicates a poor achievement. In 30 years of the country's history, the reserved seats provision did not bring any significant improvement in women's parliamentary representation, which in 2001 ended up at only 2%. In fact, the reserved seat provision was a continuation of the British legacy based on a consideration of women's backward and disadvantaged positions in then British India. In those days, fathers and husbands were reluctant to expose women to education and any public activities considering that these posed unknown dangers for them. Except for a very few, it was thought women were all along dependent on menfolk and needed special protection. The provision was continued in the new nation of Bangladesh in order that women could take part in the most important organ of the government in a parliamentary system (Karlekar, 1991; Choudhury, 1995). Perhaps, women needed some preferential treatment initially, but to Chowdhury (2000) using the word protection was another game of 'politics'. If women were so helpless why is the percentage of women elected consistently higher than the percentage of women run? Table 7.4 brings that proof.

The outcome of the reserved seat provision in the Bangladesh parliament is highly contradictory compared to other nations which have introduced a similar kind of quota or reserved seat provisions. Why then has the reserved seat policy of the Bangladesh parliament failed to succeed? To seek answers, we need to look back at the working formula of the reserved seat provision. The 300 directly elected MPs indirectly elect the 30 seats earmarked for women. These women have no familiarity with voters and no grassroots connection. They do not represent any constituency. Therefore, the majority party usually gets the opportunity to elect these women which turned out to be a vote bank for the winning party later on. They are not appointed neither they are elected by voters. The countries that did best with quota provisions used them in their political parties rather than parliament. Not only this structural part but also the intentions of introducing reserved seats deserve attention. So far two distinct intentions have been identified in the establishment of reserved seats in the Bangladesh parliament:

1. There were some prominent women politicians who were directly elected from the general constituencies during the provincial election of 1954. But despite this fact, the government party the Awami League (AL) did not nominate a single woman candidate in the country's first ever general election in 1973. The party that publicised democratic ideals considered

reserved seats as the only way of ensuring women's political representation. Later, the constitution and parliament was suspended in 1975 due to a military coup. Without any demand from women's groups, this military government established offices responsible for Women In Development (WID) in support of the declaration of 1975 as the International Year of Women and 1976-85 as the UN Decade of Women. In 1976, the government introduced 10% quotas for women in non-gazetted public service positions and in 1978 increased the proportion of women's reserved seats in parliament from 5% to 10%. Interestingly enough, it is argued that the decision came as a surprise because the military regime wanted to increase the volume of donor assistance and picked up one of the donors' favourite themes WID.⁴⁶ Women themselves were not particularly conscious of the need for parliamentary representation. They neither demanded it nor rejected it.

2. As the 30 reserved seats unduly advantages the majority parties, none of the political parties were prepared to go beyond their own interests in the lucrative 'vote bank' system and so kept the provision alive with no specific target. This provision helped the BNP in 1991 and the AL in 1996 to form single party governments. There was a constant fear on the part of political parties that without the reserved seats, Bangladesh would have experienced coalition governments in the 1990s.⁴⁷

Thus the provision, which ostensibly was for the sake of women's protection, benefited the political parties by using women as vote banks. Instead of placing more women as candidates for direct election, political parties sought the alibi that women would be represented through the reserved seats. Even in the new millennium, only 37 women contested against 1933 male candidates, a percentage of only 1.9. This kind of performance however, is not surprising. As there was no goal fixed by the political parties to increase the number of women, no party was keen on this issue. Instead of making the reserved seat provision effective for increasing women's number in the parliament, it has been used as a token all these years.

⁴⁶ See Jahan, 1995, p. 42.

⁴⁷ See Ahmed, 1998; Chowdhury, 2000; Goetz, 2001. Also see IDEA, 2001 for the State of Democracy.

Not only did the reserved seat provision fail to increase women's number in the parliament but Chowdhury (1994a, p. 98) asserted that it undermined women's representative status. In a male dominated society the non-electability of women is a recognition of political weakness, and for that reason they usually do not exercise an independent voice. She has demonstrated how successive governments took the opportunity for block votes by controlling these women representatives. Jahan (1995) argued that the members who came to parliament under the women's quota rarely took the initiative to ask tough questions or held their government accountable for their actions on women's advancement. This failure is understandable because the women parliamentarians were elected neither by a female constituency nor by a general constituency but were primarily composed of party loyalists, selected by members of the majority party in parliament. We saw earlier that representatives are responsible and accountable for their work as well as they exercise authority. But Bangladeshi women MPs lack local political party connections and because they are elected predominantly by male MPs in the parliament they are token MPs. Since independence, there has been no political commitment to women's overall development. For the sake of eradicating women's 'backwardness' the reserved seats provision has been used to maintain the status quo. However, the effectiveness of women parliamentarians in Bangladesh, according to Choudhury (1995, p. 11) showed that although no significant qualitative changes have occurred, their role and activities have become somewhat visible.

The nomination and electoral process of reserved seats for women in the Bangladesh parliament seems to be a wrong choice. The structural defect of using women's reserved seats as a vote bank by political parties has contributed to a failure of the reserved seat system in the Bangladesh parliament. Here is the basic difference between Bangladesh and Norway's reserved seat and quota policies: while it is a failure in Bangladesh in bringing more women into the parliament, the key to success of Norwegian women's parliamentary representation lies with the quota policy in political parties. Gender quotas were first introduced by the Socialist Left Party in 1975, and during the 1980s women's integration into parties increased notably as the Labour Party followed the Socialist Left in adapting quota regulations to secure women's representation in all party posts. There was some controversy at the beginning of quota implementation but largely it was accepted, and over time it has been turned into an automatic system. It is a rarity for the political parties not to have a woman as the first

or second name on the election lists. Quotas have simply become an established instrument for equality in politics; it seems natural to extend them to other areas as well (Karvonen, 1995; Matland, 1998a; Mørkhagen, 2002). The following table shows how the quota policy helped to increase women's representation in the parliament and ultimately women reached a significant level of representation.

Table 7.5. Effect of quota in political parties⁴⁸

Year	Percentage of women
1981*	26
1987	36
1991	36
1993	39
1997	36
2001	36.4

* Until 1981 there was no quota in political parties.

Not only Norway but also a number of countries have been benefited through this policy. However, without any help of this kind, New Zealand women's strength in reaching a significant stage of parliamentary representation is exemplary.

7.2.4 Sources of institutional power

7.2.4.1 Political parties

Political parties are recognised gatekeepers and institutional sources of power. Representing political parties is the first among the four tasks of women legislators. An extremely small number of women participate in the political parties in Bangladesh. Every big party has separate women sections and student fronts. Student fronts also have separate women's wings. In both cases women's insignificant number and role do not reflect any particular issue of specific interest to women other than their male dominated main party issues. They rarely get chances to exercise any decision-making power. This separate party structure is nothing but the existing cultural segregation of men and women in the society. In addition, the Third World traditions of formal political structure prevent women from participating. Among those Waylen (1996, p. 12) mentioned the timing of meetings and combative style of politics discourage women. Therefore, the girl students usually appear as amateurs in politics and do not follow a political career in their later life. Although Sheikh Hasina, the former Prime Minister and present Opposition Leader of the country took part in political demonstrations in her student life, she did not continue as a dissident. She inherited

⁴⁸ See Solheim, 2000, p. 40.

power because of a lack of other male inheritors in her family. So far, only one woman in the country's history continued her political career from student life to later life. She is Begum Matia Chowdhury, the veteran student leader of the 1960s. An analysis of the 7th (1996-2001) parliament shows that 90% of women MPs who were chosen for the reserved seats, had involvement with parties' women's sections where no mechanism for the exercise of power existed.⁴⁹

The holding of the top positions in political parties by two women for decades, far from being an example of gender advancement is a sign of weak political institutions and a lack of democracy. The current Prime Minister and Opposition Leader have held the chief positions of their parties BNP and AL since 1984 and 1981 respectively. These can only be compared with one-man parties, no one criticises the party chiefs rather they try to satisfy them in all respects. No one even dares to make any constructive criticism of party policies, there is a marked preference for unanimity. Even in the parliament, party members do not have any individual opinion but the parliamentary party chief's control is evident.⁵⁰ Despite having all the opportunities to promote women's interests, these two women did very little to bring more women into politics. The 2001 general election is a typical example of this. Although they promised on numerous occasions to bring more women into politics, AL leader Sheikh Hasina nominated only 10 women including herself for the 300-seat parliament. BNP leader Khaleda Zia did even less, nominating only three women including herself. Among the other two, one was her sister and the other one was a deceased MP's wife.

The repeated demand of the women's organisations of Bangladesh to introduce women's quotas in political parties is overlooked by the parties. In addition, the party elites appear to be the main opponents of women's political representation in Bangladesh. Norris and Inglehart (2000, p. 3) found that in traditional culture women may be reluctant to run for political office and political elites may appear as hostile to women by imposing tough selection criteria. Thus both supply and demand factors may be responsible for women's underrepresentation. However, in terms of a conservative

⁴⁹ See the biographies of women MPs in Bangladesh Parliament 1996-2001.

⁵⁰ See Ahmed, 1998. Few political commentators participated in a discussion with the BBC on 12 January 2002 where the participants inferred that unless the political parties themselves exercise democracy within their own parties, the country's democratic future is bleak. On 27 January 2002, the BBC arranged another open discussion where the participants commented that instead of democratic procedure, the Bangladesh parliament runs under a party chief's dictatorship. See the BBC World News, 2002.

society and with many visible and invisible institutional barriers, women in Bangladesh are comparatively more interested to participate in politics. Overall, few women are active in politics but this active group targets the parliament in a true sense. The 2001 general election is an example where women showed enormous interest to get nominations but extremely few were successful. Therefore, the BNP women arranged an after election open discussion where women raised their voice against the party's policy of nominating few women and the unclear position of women's reserved seats. The party General Secretary replied that they only nominated those candidates who could win. He added the word 'protection' by reminding them that women are given all sorts of protection but still could not attain any positive outcome. Unless women become equal to men in all respects they would not get elected.⁵¹ What does that mean?

In fact, women in Bangladesh are not usually public figures. For instance, during natural disasters and other crises, local male leaders visit affected areas/victims, that is how they get introduced to people. But in a similar situation, women's mobility rarely goes beyond their own locality. Therefore, unless they have a reputation of serving people in wider localities it is unlikely for them to be elected. When women from a higher socio-economic class cross the usual boundary people do not mind as it is the Indian sub-continent trend that people love to see tough women. The existing culture has little scope to advance ordinary women at the same rate as men and whenever women claim any of their rights they are asked to show similar competency with men. Political elites' claims do not carry much weight as we saw a little earlier that women are elected at a slightly higher rate than they are nominated. This kind of discrimination persists everywhere in the society. Chowdhury (2000) found another reason for nominating fewer women. As, socio-economically, women's status is low, political leaders find it difficult to share state power with their female counterparts. The culture of this affects the demand side too. A recent IPU (2000) study shows that hostile cultural attitudes to women is the second greatest barrier to running for parliament where time management stands as the first problem.

The big parties often ignore their election promises, and the women's agenda is prominent among those ignored promises. During Sheikh Hasina's tenure of government from 1996 to August 2001, the reserved seat provision expired in April

⁵¹ See 'A debate of BNP women with the General Secretary of BNP, regarding fewer women's nomination in the parliamentary election', *The Daily Janakantha*, 23 January 2002a.

2001. Sheikh Hasina had promised on 9 March 1997 that instead of the 30 reserved seats, one woman would be directly elected from each of the 64 districts in the next election. By the year 2000, several women's organisations and the Fair Election Monitoring Alliance (FEMA) had held 46 district level and five divisional seminars and workshops on electoral law reform concerning women's seats in parliament and agreed with the proposal of the government.⁵² However, on 17th June 2000, the law minister introduced a Constitution Amendment Bill proposing the continuation of the old 30 reserved seat provision for another 10 years. The minister's claim that the bill included the recommendations of the women's organisations was not correct. Women activists were surprised and agitated. Within days, the renowned Women's Caucus (*Mahila Parishad*) of the country held a seminar and this time demanded 150 seats for women through direct election. However, the AL could not pass the bill without the support of the BNP as it needed a two-thirds vote of MPs and the BNP was boycotting the parliament.

BNP not only boycotted the parliament but also accused the government of not consulting them. However, women's organisations have had a poor opinion of the BNP as it never reached a consensus on this issue. One of its longest serving powerful MPs and the Speaker of the current parliament, Mr. Jamiruddin Sircar, previously commented that the majority of women did not care about the demand for women's increased reserved seats and the principle of direct election. It is rather a headache for the well-off women (Chowdhury, 2000). While boycotting the parliament, Khaleda Zia (the then Opposition Leader) was urged by women's organisations to come to the parliament at least for the sake of the reserved seats bill but she was determined not to co-operate in the House. However, she promised that once she formed the government, this bill would get top priority with an increased number of women. She formed a government on 10 October 2001 but the women's reserved seat bill is yet to emerge because her party is wavering on the issue and its election promise.

The political situation also made the bill's future uncertain. As the BNP won more than two thirds of the seats in parliament and formed a coalition government with the fundamentalist party, it does not need any support from the 'vote bank' of women. Since the formation of the new government, women's organisations have been as active

⁵² See Khan, 2000.

as ever and arranged about 10 conferences, seminars and workshops on women's parliamentary representation. The intention of these meetings is to press the government to fulfil its election promises. However, the ruling party's equivocation draws people's attention. The law minister has already expressed his suspicion that the bill may pass but it may not be effective for this parliament. On the other hand, one anonymous source indicated that the high command of the party (i.e., the party chief and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia) has not given the green light yet.⁵³ Unlike Sheikh Hasina's government, this government does not need any support from the opposition party and has passed a number of bills. Only in the case of the women's parliamentary representation bill, has the law minister expressed his intention to get the support of the opposition party. Once the opposition party indicated that it would not oppose the bill, the law minister raised another issue: the lengthy examination process. Although his party made an election promise on this issue, the party is still confused about the nature of the bill and prefers to spend time on it. It is now confirmed that even if the bill passed in the next five years, its implementation is not possible in this term of parliament. Women's organisations are frustrated with this unexpected setback.⁵⁴

The way the women's groups in the political parties of Scandinavian countries pressurised the parties to increase the number of women candidates has no parallel in Bangladesh. Although the BNP constitution has a provision for placing 10% women in all committees, it is not followed. As there is no pressure from feminist or strong women's groups within the party, party men are reluctant to promote women. However, interestingly enough, instead of prescribing any correction measure, some party women are ready to take the opportunity of reserved seats. Women's fear of gangster politics does not prevent them from offering themselves for the position of MP under the reserved seats as it does not require any direct election. Although the party had an election promise to increase the number of women's seats and make provision for direct elections it is evident that a fraction of the ruling party women do not want any direct election and seem to be happy with the previous 30 reserved seats.⁵⁵ The impact of the reserved seats thus indirectly encouraged women not to participate in

⁵³ See *The Daily Janakantha*, 11 January 2002b, *The Daily Ittefaq*, 12, 13 and 14 January 2002a, *The Daily Prothom Alo*, 12 January 2002a.

⁵⁴ *The Daily Ittefaq*, 29 and 30 January 2002b, *The Daily Prothom Alo*, 29 and 30 January 2002b; *The Daily Janakantha*, 30 January 2002c.

⁵⁵ Women are paying visit to the ministers and lobbying strongly to become the MP against reserved seats, see Sarder, 2001.

institutional politics, as they know they will get their 10% share through the reserved seats.

While political parties appeared to be the main organisations resisting women's parliamentary representation in Bangladesh, Norway's case is just the reverse. In addition to the political parties having internal quotas, a number of the parties have also worked actively to encourage, educate and recruit women to politics (Bystydzienski, 1992b; Solheim, 2000). By 1991, half of the major political parties in Norway had chosen women as leaders and as a consequence all three candidates for the prime minister's post in the 1993 elections were women. Also the increase of women's number in the 1993 election seems to have been an effect of the contagion. Skjeie (1998) illustrated that in the 1993 parliamentary election three women party leaders competed as prime ministerial candidates, and there was intense media coverage both nationally and internationally. Women voters showed special interest in making their contribution to elect more women. Four years later however, all prime ministerial candidates were men as Gro Harlem Brundtland had resigned by then, and two other women party leaders chose not to run. Therefore, in the 1997 parliamentary election women's overall representation dropped from 39% to 36%. This was principally due to the electoral success of the right-wing Progress Party; the only Norwegian party with no stated policy on the internal distribution of leadership positions among women and men. Similar to Norway the impact of contagion also helped New Zealand women and the Labour Party's education and training policy encouraged women to put their names forward.

Unlike Bangladesh, the electoral nominations in Norway are made at the constituency level, which is much closer to the party grassroots. Even the branch or single members have the right to nominate a candidate. Two positive elements have been found very effective to increase women's parliamentary representation on the part of political parties. Firstly, the supply of female candidates is sufficient, as almost half of the party membership is women. Secondly, there are no formal hindrances in the party rules to prevent female members from becoming candidates or to be elected as members of the party executive (Sundberg, 1995, p. 101). Politically it was the long process of female politicisation that made women conscious of their own interests. Initially, women struggled for visible positions to motivate more women to compete for high positions in the party and to be elected. Thus the change was made possible by women's own

activity. Political parties also have separate women's factions and usually, these are involved in educating women for public offices and promoting issues that are of particular interest to women.

For the three countries, initially New Zealand women faced resistance from party elites. Still the National Party does not seem to be liberal in recruiting women. Bangladesh has remained the same throughout its history. Party elites never appeared to be co-operative in nominating and promoting women rather their overt hostile attitudes cause women to lag behind in taking advantage of the reserved seats. In contrast, the party elites in Norway are very sensitive to opinions of the party organisations in maximising votes and seats. Women have hardly faced strong resistance from the party elites; all are concerned to act in the direction of implementing the idea of equality, which is deeply rooted in the Nordic region.

The big political parties in Bangladesh are broadly centrist. The AL is categorised as left-of-centre, the BNP and the Jatio Party (JP) are right-of-centre and the Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh (JIB) is a right wing fundamentalist party. Political institutions are strongly influenced by cultural and religious barriers. They emphasise women's protection and purity rather than involving them in every aspect of public life. Chowdhury (1994b, p. 51-52) claimed that the constitution of the AL did not include women's role in the mainstream issues of human resources development, education and other areas. It put women in a separate heading 'Women and National Development', which is an indication of women's marginal status. The BNP declares equal status for women but this equal status refers to achieving greater respect and value for women as a mother and wife. The religious fundamentalist party JIB that opposed the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971, promotes Shariah law and propagates a sharp public-private dichotomy by directing women's seclusion and subordinate status. As the political parties do not keep any record of their members, it is very hard to find out the number of women members.⁵⁶ However, the central executive committees set up by the predominant political parties are an indication of women's poor number in party membership.

⁵⁶ See Chowdhury, 1994a, p. 97; Falguni, 1995, p. 24; Ahmed, 1998, p. 46.

Table 7.6. Women in political parties' central executive committees

Name of parties	Total members	Female members
Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)	231	11
Bangladesh Awami League (AL)	65	6
Jatiyo Party (JP)	151	4
Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh (JIB)	141	8

Source: Bangladesh National Report, 1995, p. 8

Earlier it was seen that the left wing parties are more willing to include women representatives, this was true for New Zealand and Norway. During the 1970s and 1980s, the social democratic and left wing parties in Norway introduced quotas but most centre and right wing parties considered quotas as 'un-liberal' (Dahlerup, 1998, p. 100). The Socialist Left Party was the first to adopt a quota policy. The Labour Party introduced at least a 40% quota for both sexes for all electoral nominations in 1983. It did not face any difficulty in recruiting qualified women candidates because their ultimate target was to get more women elected not just to prepare a party list. By implementing the quota system, it took three elections for women to reach about 50% of the parliamentary faction and 50% of the ministers when the Labour Party was in power (Dahlerup, 1998, p.104). At first the social democratic parties started to formalise female membership, which had been systematically recorded from 1911 to 1939 and after that no systematic data was gathered. The previous low share of female members in the Labour Party was an outcome of the close relationship of the party with masculine labour unions. While this percentage was only 11% in 1969 it reached 38% in 1995 (Sundberg, 1995, p. 91).

The 1970s seemed to be a very important decade for the raising of political consciousness among women. The flow of politicisation was not only party based but included demonstrations/protests, grassroots movements and networks. All of these alternative forms of politics were slightly dominated by women. With the adoption of the Equal Status Act in 1978, several political parties officially accepted the minimum of 40% sex quota rule in all Norwegian parties that played an important role in attracting women to high positions as it appeared a symbol of solidarity and more co-operation. Norwegian electoral studies show that due to this quota policy, women's share of members increased rapidly in the Labour Party and overall Norway tops the list in terms of female party members in the rest of Scandinavia since the early 1980s. In terms of executive committee positions, the right wing parties recruited more women

than the Social Democrats. However, in the early 1970s, the Labour Party recruited more female members in its executive committee and women's number doubled in a period of five years. Overall, the executives are slightly female dominated. For electoral nomination, a survey result of 1961-1989 shows that the Labour and Socialist Left Party gave the highest ranking order and best chances to females, whereas, the agrarian Centre and Conservative parties gave high priority to male candidates and therefore, the success rate of women was much lower for these parties.

Women are represented both in formal and informal sectors in Bangladesh. Garment industries are the most visible work places where more than 1.2 million women workers have been involved (Westfall, 1996). The employers use a vast number of illiterate and poor women as cheap labour to fulfil the demand of export oriented garments industries. But the union leadership of these female dominated garment industries mostly lies with men. Professional women are members of their own professional associations but they rarely hold any leadership positions. Only two women MPs have had a trade union background in Bangladesh's history.⁵⁷

Norway follows the same trend as New Zealand. Increased proportions of women are involved in the labour force and trade unions in Norway. While the percentage of women's trade union membership was 23% in 1970/71 it went up to 41% in 1990/91 (Karvonen, 1995, p. 139). More than 50% of women MPs of the 2001-2003 parliament have a trade union background.⁵⁸

7.2.4.2 Electoral systems

While PR systems have been found to be 'women-friendly' electoral systems, Bangladesh employs the least favourable to women system of FPP. However, PR is only one of the mechanisms of increasing women's parliamentary representation. Matland (1998b) found that for developing countries, PR is not as effective as it is in developed countries because to meet one standard a developing country may fail in another. For example, while electoral rules are mouldable, cultural norms, women's status in the society and the country's development level is quite resistant to change. Goetz (1992, p. 12) described the existing patriarchal culture of Bangladesh as 'among

⁵⁷ See the biographies of women MPs in Bangladesh Parliament 1996-2001.

⁵⁸ See the biographies of women MPs in Norwegian Storting 2001-03 at <http://www.stortinget.no/representantene/biografier.html>.

the least negotiable in the world'. Therefore, even with the PR system, political parties may discriminate against putting women's names on the list, Matland (1998b) fears in the case of developing countries. There is no doubt that the two major parties always took the opportunity to use the 30 seats reserved for women to form a single party government which might not have been possible under the PR system. Except for the reserved seat provision in the parliament therefore, all other factors hinder the cause of women in Bangladesh. The FPP electoral system along with conservative socio-cultural values combine to keep women underrepresented and powerless.

The 'women-friendly' PR electoral system has a great effect on Scandinavian women's parliamentary representation. But electoral systems were found to be less effective unless combined with other mechanisms such as effective voices from pressure groups, within the parties and society as mentioned earlier. While most other researchers such as Matland (1995), Norris and Lovenduski (1995) have nominated the PR electoral system as the key to the success of women's high political representation in Nordic countries, according to Wängnerud (2000) with an egalitarian backbone of the society women's organisations and networks played strong roles in Nordic societies. She argued that the electoral systems in Nordic countries have not been changed since the 1970s but women's parliamentary representation started to increase from the 1980s when gender quotas were adopted in political parties. Women's greater representation in the Norwegian parliament is such a case where the electoral system cannot be identified as a singular enhancing factor.

7.3 Sources of structural power

Thus far we have gathered from our theoretical framework that political culture also depends on the nature of the regime. We have identified democracy and socio-economy as sources of power, an influence that leads to effectiveness.

7.3.1 Democracy

In 30 years of Bangladesh's history, the democratic constitution has been postponed by two military coups and the people have experienced prolonged military rule. The founder of the country, along with a majority of his family members, was killed in the first coup. Ultimately, two military rulers formed their own political party and legalised their rule by calling a general election. One of these parties, the BNP is now in power although its founder was killed in a coup. The country remained under absolute military

rule from 1975-90. After massive people's pressure and demonstrations, military rule was abolished in 1990 and the country became a parliamentary democracy in 1991. But we experienced earlier that authoritarianism in party and parliament is dominant in Bangladesh. Boycotting parliament by big parties is another deviation of democratic practice.

The regime could not ensure the safety of its citizens and human rights abuse was widespread. The 1991 Report of the Task Forces identified specific barriers to women's participation in politics. It emphasised the need for the eradication of the unholy alliance of big money and arms in political power.⁵⁹ The situation is much worse now. The failure of institutional politics in favour of gangster politics has made things much tougher for women. While women are entering into other aspects of public life, they generally are not interested in politics to the same extent because of its violent nature. In August – September just before the 2001 general election on 1 October, more than 150 people were killed in political conflicts and in the month of October 2001, 266 people were killed and 213 women were reported to have been raped.⁶⁰ In addition, women are vulnerable to police brutality and violence. Assaulting women is one of the popular tricks to discourage them from involving themselves in politics. While demonstrating against the ruling party in May 1999, the police took off one woman's *Sari* (main garment of women).⁶¹ Cultural prejudice blamed this woman for attending the demonstration. It seems, women are rarely ready to bear this kind of shame in a patriarchal culture and remain absent from participating in formal institutional politics. A similar thing happened on 9 January 2002 in an opposition party street demonstration. Police tried to take off women's clothing and bashed the veteran woman politician Begum Matia Chowdhury. Referring to this kind of police torture, one of the high court judges termed the police in Bangladesh as 'Frankenstein'.⁶²

It is believed from the theoretical framework that democratic nations promote equality, liberty, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. Availability of these democratic values advanced Norwegian women and they did not face any arbitrary barriers in their way to political advancement. Similar to New Zealand, Norway

⁵⁹ See the 'Report of the Task Forces on Bangladesh Development Strategies for the 1990s', p. 351.

⁶⁰ The country's Home Minister delivered these statistics in the parliament on 18 November 2001. Also see BBC's analysis of the law and order situation of Bangladesh. BBC World News, 2001b.

⁶¹ The photograph of two police personnel taking off one woman activist's sari, was published in all daily newspapers in Bangladesh along with *The Daily Prothom Alo*, 22 May 1999.

⁶² See Muntasir Mamun, 'Frankenstein Police: what is the fate?', *The Daily Janakantha*, 14 January 2002.

originated as a democratic country. Therefore, the scope for comparison in Norway regarding variable democratic government is limited. However, it is obvious that unlike Bangladesh where women's social mobility is restricted, democracy played a significant role for Norwegian women's political advancement.

7.3.2 Socio-economic conditions

While wealthy status is a must for Bangladeshi politicians to win electoral nomination, women's socio-economic status is very low. Women's gross defeat in the 2001 general election was analysed as due to their confronting the monetary game.⁶³ However, this is not only true for women; for all prospective candidates, their financial situation is a general criterion to get selected. The number of businessmen and industrialists is increasing rapidly in the parliament. They join the respective parties just before the election and money, rather than party political experience, is the prerequisite of their selection. Unprecedented examples of money games occurred during the 2001 general election. Many of the long time dedicated party workers were denied nomination as the nomination papers were sold to moneyed men. The BBC analysed it as an unhealthy political culture and named the parliament as a millionaire's club.⁶⁴ We have seen earlier that Bangladesh's women have extremely limited property rights, therefore, they get the least priority in winning electoral nomination. Along with the deprivation of equal property rights, women have limited access to education and employment, which also aggravates their ability to win nomination. In addition to these selection criteria, Matland (1998b, p. 118) found another element causal for women's underrepresentation in developing countries. Involvement in education and the labour market increases women's political consciousness and participation in industrialised countries. But for developing countries, women usually work for their subsistence at the primary level. Therefore, sometimes a high rate of labour force participation does not create any positive impact on women's political participation. Women's visibility has been increased in both education and the labour market in Bangladesh but that is not reflected in the political arena. The visible women in the current political mainstream in Bangladesh are from a higher economic class. Better socio-economic condition is thus a source of power channel for these women towards the parliament.

⁶³ BBC World News, 2 October 2001c.

⁶⁴ See Ahmed, 1998; BBC World News, 30 September 2001a.

While individual financial inability inhibits women's political representation in developing countries, women in developed countries are greatly benefited by state-support. A state-funded electoral campaign is one of those. Also as countries become more developed women are increasingly integrated into all spheres of public life including the national legislature. Several processes that accompany development such as weakening of traditional values, decreased fertility rates, greater educational and labour force participation and attitudinal changes in perceptions of the appropriate roles for women increased women's political resources and decreased existing barriers to political activity of Norwegian women. As in New Zealand, Norwegian women are earners. The welfare state provides childcare and thus encourages women to work outside. Electoral nomination is not a barrier for Norwegian women of limited financial means if they have other qualities. In this Mørkhagen's (2002, p. 10) assertion is noteworthy:

We live today in a rich and smoothly functioning society where few people fall outside the safety net of national insurance and pension schemes when they find they are unable to provide for themselves. Thanks to pension schemes, sickness benefits and national insurance benefits very few people live in dire poverty today. And we have rights in the workplace that many people in other countries no doubt envy, with respect to protection against dismissal, the opportunity to take care of our children and the opportunity to divide the workload between men and women.

7.4 Summary and conclusion

Beginning with the barriers, we have gathered information that both Bangladesh and Norway are deeply religious countries but the influence of Islam and Christianity applies in contrasting ways. While Bangladeshi women's public life activities are mostly constrained by religion, Norwegian women's lives are far less constrained. Reynolds's findings of the negative influence of Islam on women's representation is accurate for Bangladesh whilst Christianity does not play any inhibitory role on Norwegian women's political headway these days. Although the influence of Christianity is evident, New Zealand is largely seen as a secular country. Religion matters little to women's public life activities including their legislative representation.

In addition to religious restrictions, Bangladeshi women live in a strong patriarchal culture that determines their position relative to men. Their financial dependency on men affects all other aspects of their lives; therefore, choosing a non-traditional career, like politics, is usually a low priority for most women. Culture also hinders women's education; thus few women qualify for powerful positions. The political institutions are

bound by traditional patriarchal culture and conservative religious attitudes that discriminate against women. The factors identified are interconnected and not only contribute to women's underrepresentation in the parliament but also limit their effectiveness. That is how culture matters.

An unusual co-existence of patriarchy and egalitarianism is evident in Norway. The small and fairly homogeneous state of Norway with strong social values enhanced women's cause and Norwegian women rarely faced any cultural resistance despite the male still being regarded as head of the family. Patriarchy is fading away in New Zealand but women's past struggle is not a matter to overlook. Even although forms of patriarchy continue to exist they no longer have much impact except for some isolated incidences for New Zealand and Norway. For example, culture is held partly responsible for socialising women differently making them less ambitious and developing low self-esteem. Thus unlike Bangladeshi women, both New Zealand and Norwegian women face an indirect impact of culture.

Education and labour market participation have been identified as the key tools of Norwegian and New Zealand women's overall advancement and sources of legislative power. Bangladeshi women lag far behind with in these two key areas. Yet, similar to Bangladesh, very few Norwegian women are involved in corporate structures, businesses and technical jobs. However, although Bangladeshi women's public life visibility has been more apparent than in the past, it is not reflected in the political arena. Subsistence needs appear to be more crucial than political power for Bangladeshi women.

How do women of these three countries differ in terms of effective representation? No marked difference appeared between Norway and New Zealand against the indicators of cabinet position and select committee assignments. Appointment of women cabinet ministers near parity level has been a practice of Norway since 1981 when Gro Harlem Brundtland became the first woman prime minister of Norway. The New Zealand Labour Party followed the same pathway, as the 46th parliament indicates. Allocation of select committee positions is another area where both of these countries appointed a significant number of women as chairpersons. Stereotypical issue preference through select committee positions is less evident. Women MPs in these countries have been found to be effective in exercising power from all sources. On the other hand, as we

have seen, Bangladesh is far behind these two countries. Bangladeshi women MPs' powerlessness is common. Normally, with few exceptions they cannot exercise resource, position, expert and other institutional power.

Stepping-stones affect both effectiveness and leadership pathways. Reynolds's proposition of harder and softer portfolios as the pathway to top positions, however, did not apply to any of the three countries. For Bangladesh, familial ties appeared to be the stepping-stones for two women leaders and are more common in developing countries. However, this is a sign of women's lower effectiveness in conventional politics. These two women leaders' overall effectiveness is also affected as they distanced themselves from representing women. They rarely promoted women for a political career. Women leaders of Norway and New Zealand advanced from so-called softer portfolios. They have been proved effective and exercised a substantial degree of power from those softer portfolios. In addition to their usual portfolio duties they acted for women by promoting more women in politics and by recruiting more women in cabinets.

Another key point is quotas and reserved seats. These mechanisms are used to increase women's number in parliament. From the cultural drawbacks onwards none of the sources of power appeared as beneficial for Bangladeshi women. At least the reserved seat provision could have been one of the state interventions for women's advancement in parliament. However, the structural fault lies with the policy that applies it in the parliament rather than in political parties. Thus the policy has been proved weak and ineffective. Indirectly elected, by the predominantly male MPs rather than any grassroots support, the female MPs inevitably possess a secondary status in the parliament and lack any direct responsibility for a constituency. Their task allocation is also lower than the directly elected MPs. Thus they are not accountable and responsible at the same rate as male MPs. Similarly, their authority remains under question limiting their effectiveness. Without any fixed target with reserved seats women's parliamentary representation reached only 2% in 7 general elections.

Quotas in political parties seem to be more effective than quotas in the parliament. This strategy has been highly credited by Wängnerud (2000) for Nordic countries. The quota rule adopted by most Norwegian political parties had a larger effect on the political culture in promoting female representation. Once women made up at least 40% of party membership it was easier to prepare the list for electoral nomination on an equity basis.

Being general members and party executives, these women take part in the decision making process. By the time they enter into the parliament, they know how to make policy. Elected by the people they are held responsible and accountable to these people. Thus quotas in political parties rather than in the parliament have proved more helpful in bringing about women's effective representation in Norway. By targeting fixed goals with quotas, the country took only three elections to reach the numerical critical mass of women in the parliament. New Zealand women's political effectiveness is a degree higher again as they did not receive any help from such affirmative measures although they took longer to reach the numerical critical mass.

Until now, women's organisations in Bangladesh have not been successful or very active in implementing their demand to increase women's representation in the parliament. This contrasts with the vigorous campaigns by women's organisations and networks, organised from 1971 to get more women into Norwegian politics. In fact, several Scandinavian women studies scholars gave the most credit to women's organisations and networks for increasing the number of women in Scandinavian parliaments and Norway belongs to that category (Bystydzienski, 1992b and 1994; Skjeie, 1991a, 1991b and 1998; Ros, 1994; Dahlerup, 1998; Wängnerud, 2000). A similar trend is evident in the case of New Zealand women.

Regarding institutional sources of power it is observed that Norwegian women MPs have strong party and trade union backgrounds. The lack of strong resistance from the party elites was one of the significant reasons for women's political advancement in Norway. While this strategy became highly successful for Norway, party elites remain hostile to women's nomination in Bangladesh. Combined with several other favourable elements, the PR electoral system appeared to be a positive element in women's increased representation in Norway. But along with other factors, the FPP electoral system hinders Bangladeshi women's parliamentary representation. The role of the New Zealand National Party in nominating women is still controversial. However, the MMP electoral system is an obvious source of women's political power by facilitating the election of more women.

Both the nature of the regime and the economic situation of Bangladesh are not conducive to women's parliamentary representation. In addition to the political elites' negative attitudes, the violent nature of politics and police brutality specifically made

politics a fearsome place for women. The few who are interested in politics cannot compete in the monetary game with limited and/or no financial ability. On the other hand, both democratic regimes and a prosperous economy can be considered as facilitators of women's increased representation in Norway and New Zealand.

We started this chapter with an assumption that Bangladesh and Norway are two contrasting countries. While equality of gender is a difficult future goal for Bangladesh, Norway appears to be at the forefront of gender equality with the first global position in GEM. Egalitarianism is the backbone of the society and therefore, women face less resistance. Norwegian women have made spectacular headway in purely quantitative and qualitative terms in politics. Various other factors stand out as being of crucial importance such as the growth of women's cultural, educational and economic resources, government policies and the achievements and influence of the women's movement. Since the 1960s all these interconnected factors have been operative side by side and contributed to the rapid growth of women's representation in Norwegian politics. Bangladeshi women lag far behind the Norwegian standard.

In the concluding chapter an assessment has been made to show the comparative effectiveness or ineffectiveness of women as legislative representatives.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

Underrepresentation of women in parliaments is now widely regarded as a problem. But what hinders women's equal representation? This work has evaluated this problem from two aspects. Firstly, barriers remain against women's legislative participation. Secondly, number is a pre-requisite for equal representation but to be effective representatives, women need to exercise legislative power and influence. In addition to their legislative representation women are expected to be representatives of women. If there were no barriers women could be more effective as representatives, which is demonstrated by some legislators throughout the world. This brief cross-cultural study consisting of New Zealand, Norway and Bangladesh was designed on the assumption that both barriers to participation and barriers to effectiveness vary from culture to culture. However, the primary research is limited to the New Zealand parliament.

Why study New Zealand? The unique features of New Zealand are that, it is the first country in the world to achieve women's suffrage; it was leading the world in women's parliamentary representation under the FPP electoral system; no affirmative measures such as quota and reserved seats assisted women to reach a 30.8% numerical critical mass. These apparent successes leads us to study how New Zealand women have overcome barriers and it raises the question of whether the barriers faced by them were lower than other states; what system or strategy helped them to succeed; and how effective they are in both their legislative duties and as women's representatives? By using both the *event* and *reputational* approaches, we have assessed women legislators' power and their effectiveness through four legislative duties and qualities. They are: holding of cabinet positions; select committee assignments; speaking ability and overall reputation. We have gathered information, including primary information on the New Zealand case study, and outlined the basic differences in three countries Bangladesh, Norway and New Zealand. Based on the findings of previous chapters, this chapter aims to address the hypotheses formulated throughout the work.

8.1 Barriers to participation and effectiveness

It is obvious and has been demonstrated that women can be effective legislative representatives, but multidimensional and interconnected barriers still remain persistent in inhibiting women's political participation and effective representation. The hypothesis regarding barrier was that '*specific barriers hinder women's legislative participation and effectiveness*'. But what are these specific barriers? They were classified into two broad categories. In general societal barriers, we found that women's reproductive role, socialisation process, people's attitudes, the private and public sphere division and cultural and religious norms and rules play an inhibitory role limiting women's political participation and effectiveness. Secondly, women face difficulty in accessing institutionalised formal political power. We have formulated a framework for the sources of power that lead to effectiveness. But how great are those barriers in an individual country? Do they equally affect all countries or do they differ from culture to culture? Does the framework apply to all countries? It is not possible to provide a categorical answer based on one case study and two partial cases, but throughout, we have cited examples from numerous countries and those can be used along with our findings to provide indicative answers to some of these questions.

8.1.1 General societal barriers

In the first category, the reproductive role, which creates time constraints for women, appeared to be a major obstacle to women's political participation across cultures. All of the New Zealand interviewee MPs, both male and female, acknowledged this as a great barrier. Although many mothers have overcome these barriers and succeeded in politics they generally entered politics once their children were grown up. And what is the implication for those who enter the parliament in their later life? Late entry hinders women's promotion and prospects as the Green Party Co-leader Jeanette Fitzsimmons asserted "...you come to it later in life than men do, and there may be less opportunity perhaps to reach high positions of influence because of that, because you start later." Jeanette Fitzsimmons herself, National MPs Belinda Vernon, Ann Tolley and Dr. Lynda Scott, all acknowledged that they entered parliament once their children were grown up. Labour Minister Lianne Dalziel admitted her inability to cope with two consuming careers that is, motherhood and politics. We also learnt earlier that Helen Clark, the Prime

Minister of New Zealand chose not to have children, which she thought was a barrier for her political career. Such examples are plentiful in the New Zealand parliament and throughout the world.

The socialisation process has multiple consequences for the construction of genders. Different socialisation processes affect women's political participation and effectiveness. In the primary research almost all of the women MPs held socialisation responsible for women's low self-esteem and lack of ambition. This is one of the causes of the supply side problem in New Zealand. Techniques such as special training on assertiveness and consciousness-raising among women were, and still are, undertaken by the Labour Women's Council, which appears to be very useful for many women MPs, such as Judy Keall, Steve Chadwick and Ann Hartley.

However, it is evident from chapters 4-6 that politics is not a popular profession in New Zealand. This new element of the cause of the supply side problem became also evident from the primary research. A significant number of women MPs indicated that the confrontational style of behaviour in parliament is a major element in discouraging women from coming forward. Labour MP Georgina Beyer described her uncomfortableness at the combative nature of the parliament that affects her effectiveness. Similar reaction came from Alliance Minister Laila Harre and Labour Minister Marian Hobbs.

We posed a question earlier regarding the extent to which cultural and religious barriers impact on women's political effectiveness. According to the literature reviewed, throughout the world, religion and culture, either together or separately seem to be dominant factors inhibiting and/or enhancing both women's political participation, and the exercising of power that enables their effectiveness as legislators. The formulation of a sub hypothesis that '*cultural and religious norms have a significant impact on women's political effectiveness*' has its origin in the claims of D'Amico and Beckman (1995, p. 3) and Klenke (1996, p. 23) in chapters one and two. They claimed that culture determines the identity of a human group and gender is an inherent part of culture. Gender concentrates on the differences between men and women that culture has created. In most studies, culture is identified as the root cause of women's political marginality and inequality in a particular society (D'Amico and Beckman, 1995; Haynes, 1996; Klenke,

1996, 1999; Moore and Shackman, 1996; Paxton, 1997; Matland, 1998b; Kenworthy and Malami, 1999; Reynolds, 1999; Norris and Inglehart, 2000). Although cultural and religious rules and norms usually have a substantial negative impact on women's political participation and effective representation, the degree of this impact varies greatly and differs between the three countries studied, New Zealand, Norway and Bangladesh. Culture alone is not the ultimate determinant of participation. This study faces the dilemma of attempting to generalise the impacts of patriarchal culture and religion. But let us look back at what sort of patriarchy we were talking about. Women's status is lowest in those societies where they are placed under one man's authority in the home; women may never acquire the confidence to seek political power in a culture where males are more highly regarded than females. And thus women's empowerment is least developed in these kinds of traditional patriarchal societies (Kirkpatrick, 1974; Rosaldo, 1974; Hall, 1992). There are elements of this in the nineteenth century New Zealand women's scenario.

However, culture is not a static system in New Zealand. With the dynamism of culture, patriarchy has faded over time. This is not only evident in male-female relationships, but many changes have appeared in people's attitudes. Until the 1970s people thought of women only as wives and mothers, and those with traditional views, believed women should have children. Attacks on women candidates and the notice provided by the SROW in 1986 (chapter four) asking women to go back home to take care of their husbands and children are a reflection of a typical patriarchal cultural attitude. Today, people with equalitarian views (referred in chapter four) outweigh the people with traditional views. Childlessness for women in the New Zealand parliament is common. Although some people and some in the media try to make childlessness a ground for attacking a female leader's suitability for office, it is of less concern to a majority of people.

Today, New Zealand women are more or less independent. How did the patriarchy change in New Zealand? Green MP Sue Kedgley pointed out that "...right until the 1970s...our society was so entrenched into patriarchal culture... We have been challenging that through the women's movement but it all takes time to change the fundamental culture, change of attitudes, values, it does not happen over-night." Despite an image of an equal society, women still bear the brunt of domestic burdens. Women's culture in New Zealand has a characteristic known as the Cult of Domesticity, a popular terminology that indicates where

women's position is located. However, the majority of women legislators in New Zealand did not acknowledge the influence of the Cult of Domesticity. Green party Co-leader Jeanette Fitzsimmons's assertion is noteworthy: "I don't think women remain under the control of men at all."

New Zealand has a distinct minority culture with its indigenous Maori community. This needs special treatment and the parliamentary quota for Maori has existed since 1867. Regarding the Labour Party's effort to create a balanced representative parliament, Labour Minister Lianne Dalziel asserted "...we have to review to make sure that we get a gender balance as well as balance for other matters. For example, Maori representation is really important in a country like New Zealand." We also found earlier that Maori women's hurdles were more difficult than for mainstream Pakeha women. The Maori Women's Welfare League is one kind of drive to encourage Maori women. However, has not the dynamism of culture influenced that community? A significant number of Maori ministers and MPs are an indication that, similar to the Pakeha community, substantial attitudinal and cultural changes have appeared in the Maori community too. Labour's Maori transsexual MP Georgina Beyer, who was elected for a constituency seat, had no connection with women's network/movements, and replied to the question of patriarchy, "Certainly...our patriarchy is breaking down."

As we have seen earlier Norway also had a traditional patriarchal culture otherwise women would not have had to fight for voting rights, the Equal Status Act and quotas in political parties. However, its patriarchal ideology now co-exists with women's self-sufficient roles. Because of a strong emphasis on social representation, equality and justice by Norwegian society, women's demands were accommodated relatively quickly with less resistance than other states (Skjeie, 1991b, 1998; Bystydzienski, 1992b, 1994, 1995; Wängnerud, 2000). Unlike Norway, women in New Zealand were rarely assisted by the state. Throughout New Zealand history the strategy taken by women themselves was to fight against every obstacle. 'Do It Yourself' seems an appropriate phrase for New Zealand women.

Compared to New Zealand and Norway, Bangladesh has made minimal progress. Why then does Bangladesh's patriarchal culture remain so rigid? We suspected earlier that religion could be creating overwhelming barriers to women's advancement. But not all

religions have the same impact otherwise Norway would have been at the forefront in resisting women with its Christian influence. A number of New Zealand women MPs left churches protesting against the discriminatory and conservative attitudes held towards woman's roles. In Bangladesh, fundamentalist Muslims find it easy to make their point, and, no one dares to criticise religion. Reynolds's finding that Islam is more rigid than any other religion in holding women back seems true for Bangladesh. Bangladeshi women's public life activities are virtually in name only due to the rigid patriarchy reinforced by conservative religious doctrines. In fact, religion legitimised the patriarchy of Bangladeshi society. Religious laws affect and hinder women's guardianship, property ownership, marriage and divorce. It is not only true for Bangladesh but also for almost all Muslim populated countries as the IPU demonstrated. Thus culture and religion do appear to be important conditioning factors. Our sub hypothesis that '*cultural and religious norms have a significant impact on women's political effectiveness*' therefore is supported for Bangladesh but for Norway and New Zealand it is only of partly true.

8.1.2 Women's access difficulty to sources of legislative power

We made a connection between power and effectiveness by using the working definition 'effectiveness is the ability to exercise power'. But due to barriers identified, women do not have easy access to all the sources of legislative power. If they cannot get access to the sources of power how can they be effective? Legislators exercise position power through cabinet positions and resource power through select committee assignments. Both cabinet positions and select committee assignments were selected as indicators to assess women legislators' power, a precondition for effectiveness.

Among the 13 select committees in the New Zealand parliament, women chaired six, which is significant in terms of their 30.8% representation. The varied chairperson positions enabled women to exert a wider influence on policies. Through select committee assignments we also assessed women legislators' stereotypical issue bias. Finance, defence and foreign affairs select committees and portfolios are recognised as powerful and prestigious in many legislatures and nations. In some legislatures women's lesser visibility in these areas is identified as one of the significant reasons for considering them powerless. In addition, addressing only social welfare issues is considered a stereotypical role for women. The question can be asked, if a male legislator repeatedly raises economic issues

why is he not considered stereotyped? Partly it is because of the technical issues involved. We saw earlier Buchanan's (1962) assertion that finance as a subject carries considerable prestige because of its complexity. While other areas remain important, budget preparation affects the whole of society, government and the economy. Similarly, law is another technical subject, which is important for the writing of legislation. Women's lower visibility in these two areas compared with men's greater presence in these and all other areas encouraged researchers to consider women as confined by stereotypes.

However, our research failed to confirm the absolute importance of finance, defence and foreign affairs in New Zealand. It is true that they may all bear a high value in politics but nations have different priorities. For example, the USA, Costa Rica and Finland all differ in terms of power, economies and the nature of the state. Indicating the weight of foreign affairs and defence committees and portfolios, New Zealand Green MP Sue Kedgley asserted, "I don't think those are harder portfolios... and I don't think these are any more important and prestigious than the health select committee and the social security select committee..." A similar opinion came from Alliance Minister Laila Harre.

What trend of interests have we found for New Zealand women MPs? We considered that health, social services and education committees are women's traditional areas. 31% of women MPs are found in these traditional areas, 16% in both traditional and non-traditional areas and surprisingly, a majority i.e., 53% of women MPs are found in the non-traditional areas. The development of women's diversified interests has not only originated from their own realisation but changing perspectives of time have also played an important role. As time passes and their educational and professional lives are expanded, so with their political careers. From the analysis of Horn et al., (1983) we know that in the 1930s New Zealand women MPs' emphasis was mostly on women and young people; in the 1940s, the emphasis was on people's individual needs and problems, and they emphasised the specific needs of the electorate in the 1950s. Economic issues on a local, national and global scale started to attract women from the 1950s to the 1980s. Today women have the same tendency to widen their issue preference by shifting from stereotypical women's issues to broad-based policies in all areas.

None of the women MPs of New Zealand perceived any rigid stereotypes; some acknowledged some stereotyping, some said certain issues affect women's lives and that is why they are interested in those. Labour MP Judy Keall, the chair of the health select committee found stereotyping a problem but she endorsed her own and other MPs' particular issue preference as personal choice. However, Alliance Minister Laila Harre did not find it to be a problem rather acknowledging that women can be effective in their preferred job with prior experience. To her "...because most people come to parliament after having pursued a career in something else first. So where they'll feel they can be most effective in parliament will tend to have some reflection on what they were doing before they came into parliament." We saw earlier that successful political woman Jeane J. Kirkpatrick of the US recognised women's personal preferences to a certain degree without violating the conventional practices (1974, p. 114). But whatever explanations the New Zealand women MPs brought forward in favour of their stereotypical women's issues inclination, it seems to be still a small problem as the Speaker of the New Zealand parliament acknowledged. Labour MP Dianne Yates found that sometimes voters question the justification of voting for women candidates as they found women only raise issues that affect women. This illustrates the hypothesis that *'representing women only may limit women's ability to fulfil their other representative roles.'* In fact, MPs are expected to address all issues, as they are representatives of the nation and constituencies. The Labour Caucus and Prime Minister Helen Clark's initiative and effort to expand women MPs' issue choice is one of the special techniques to overcome this problem.

We enumerated specific examples from the past when women MPs in Britain and New Zealand refused to work in stereotypical women's areas both in select committees and in cabinet portfolios. This case study indicates that there is no such discrimination in allocating tasks in the present-day New Zealand parliament. Therefore, discrimination cannot hinder women's effectiveness.

The 1999-2002 New Zealand cabinet consisted of 44% women members, which was above their proportion in the parliament. This record high number of cabinet positions held by women is a sign of their effective legislative representation. The former Labour Party President and current (1999-2002) MP and Attorney General Margaret Wilson (2001, p. 378) has earlier asserted that women's exercise of political power and influence peaked

under Labour in 1990 when women comprised 25% of the cabinet. Recruiting women in large numbers for cabinet has been a common practice of the New Zealand Labour Party since 1990. But the National Party still remains conservative both in nominating women for candidacy and recruiting women for cabinet portfolios.

One important result of this research is disproving Reynolds's (1999) stepping-stones theory. Stepping-stones did not apply to women leaders in the three countries. Without holding any of the so-called harder portfolios they have reached the top. In fact hard and soft issues do not appear to be important in New Zealand and Norwegian politics, rather women leaders in these countries have advanced from 'softer' portfolios. Welfare states have different priorities, and social welfare, health and education are central to these nations. Ministries are also judged in terms of expenditure. Large budgets, numerous personnel and complex issues make these portfolios vital and powerful in welfare states like Norway and New Zealand.

Another sub hypothesis was that *'professional occupations and labour market participation are important sources of political effectiveness.'* They are crucial both for developed and developing countries as they create opportunities for women's public activities by raising awareness. Although women MPs' lack of expertise in certain areas such as finance compels them to take positions in disproportional numbers in more traditional areas, overall both New Zealand and Norwegian women MPs are categorised as professionals. However, if it were true that education in general increases women's political effectiveness why do Bangladeshi women lag behind in politics but are relatively more visible in other professions? Why has the most highly educated Indian State Kerala produced the smallest number of women both in state and national legislatures in India? The struggle for subsistence appears to be the main target of educated women in developing countries (Matland, 1998b). Along with subsistence, women in these countries avoid politics because of its corrupt and violent nature (Kaushik, 1993; Kishwar, 1996b).

Some controversy exists in the literature over what levels of education are necessary for political effectiveness. In some countries subordinate levels of skill do not seem to be a problem for women entering parliament as in Bangladesh. On the other hand, professionalism alone is not a sufficient prerequisite, but the levels of skills appear to be an

important conditioning factor for entering legislatures. However, in the USA, women's remarkable visibility in managerial and executive positions is not reflected in Congress. While about 50% of women hold managerial positions in the US, their meagre 14% of positions in the Congress raises questions (Hague et al., 1998; Norris and Inglehart, 2000). We encountered this problem earlier and found that one factor is the importance of a legal background for entering the US Congress.

A significant number of New Zealand women MPs raised their concern about facing difficulties in levels of skills while working in the parliament. They are less visible in foreign affairs and finance select committees due to lack of expertise in these areas. ACT MP Dr Muriel Newman, National MP Pansy Wong and Alliance MP Dr Liz Gordon could not win selection for the finance committee due to lack of expertise in finance. National MP Dr Lynda Scott reflected another aspect of knowledge as a criterion: "I asked for the social services, health committee because there is my expertise, I'm a doctor. If I would be placed in finance, it would be hopeless." No doubt social welfare issues are enormously important in welfare states. However, earlier we questioned the issue of expertise by suggesting diversity of knowledge. In a small parliament like New Zealand there is less opportunity to specialise in a particular area and there are more incentives to develop wider interests. Nevertheless, we learned that lack of sufficient knowledge in technical subjects such as telecommunications is one of the barriers to women MPs' effectiveness in the parliament.

For Bangladeshi women the problem is multidimensional. Women's literacy rate is only 24.2%, as culturally they are not encouraged to seek education. Dependency on men is another outcome of culture, and few women are involved in professional occupations. Overall, professionalism and subject-based expertise do not appear to be prerequisites for Bangladeshi women to enter the parliament because for cultural reasons selectors accept women's weaker position. However, we suggested earlier that participation does not ensure effectiveness. None of the women MPs in the previous parliament were given a chance to chair a committee. Women rarely talk or take any initiative in the House. These indicate women's lack of knowledge and confidence, which are deeply rooted in religious and cultural phenomena. In fact, education and professional occupation in general can only be a partial explanation of the sources of political effectiveness. While education in general

facilitates women's public life activities, it is not a determining variable for political effectiveness and that has less support for the sub hypothesis that *'professional occupations and labour market participation are important sources of political effectiveness.'*

The usefulness of quota and reserved seats is another important finding. The New Zealand women MPs are exceptional. They reached critical mass without the help of any special measures. Most of the women MPs in New Zealand did not acknowledge their 30.8% representation as significantly low. We posed a question earlier: what causes the failure of reserved seats in Bangladesh but success in Norway? This question was already answered in chapter seven. In short, for Norway the quota in political parties proved to be one of the most effective vehicles to achieve significant numbers of women elected. It took only three elections for Norwegian women to reach critical mass and once they achieved it the provision was abandoned. Why then has a similar policy failed in Bangladesh?

In fact, the reserved seat provision of Bangladesh was substantially different from Norway's provision. To impress outside sources such as donors and the international community, the military government of Bangladesh introduced reserved seats without setting any goal. Women's groups and networks showed little interest, as they did not ask for them. The reserved seat provision also has structural loopholes. Instead of being imposed within political parties, it applies to the parliament as a whole. Moreover, it has to be regularly renewed. Bangladeshi women MPs' incompetence appeared to be true both in getting into the reserved seats and in the proper use of them once they were in the parliament. To get them into parliament, a token election is held where women are elected by the predominantly male MPs. Once these women MPs are in the House they are not given responsibilities equal to the popularly elected MPs. Without proper responsibility and accountability these women MPs are ineffective, and only token representatives.

By contrast, in New Zealand where no special provisions exist, women's networks and organisations both in and outside party politics, appear to be very effective. Women were rarely assisted by the state towards their political advancement, but they themselves were organised through the women's movement and networks. A majority of women MPs have had women's network connections in New Zealand. Our primary research confirms the suggestion that left wing parties are more sympathetic to women's causes and issues and

therefore more women MPs originate from left wing parties. Among the MPs interviewed almost all of the Labour, Greens and Alliance MPs had connections with women's organisations. For example, Labour's Ann Hartley recalled "I was involved in many women's organisations of my time." National's women are less inclined to be associated with such networks, as 50% of interviewee MPs had no connections. Similarly, both of the ACT MPs, Penny Webster and Dr Muriel Newman, did not find any usefulness in women's networks in their political careers. Although the National MP Belinda Vernon had no connection with such networks, one significant acknowledgement regarding their contribution is noteworthy, that the "women's movement has not been important to me in terms of being a motivational factor or influencing my political beliefs at all although indirectly I guess it has...I guess indirectly more recently the traditional feminist politics...I don't feel it influenced me directly but has influenced society and has made it much easier for women to play equal roles in society and in the parliament." National women MPs' individual reluctance to join women's networks has also been reflected in their party and parliament.

In Norway a strong women's movement in and outside the party structure primarily influenced political parties, and party competition has proved to be an effective mechanism for women's integration. The contagion process helps to explain why all parties nominate more women from the fear that if they do not they may lose women's votes. In this connection even men were willing to limit their proportion of seats to accommodate more women for the sake and interests of their parties (Kelber, 1994, p. 81). Also the women's groups both in and outside parties have worked efficiently irrespective of conservative and leftist parties in Norway (Bystydzienski, 1992b, 1994; Kelber, 1994; Skjeie, 1991a, 1991b, 1998). Women's numbers in the Storting increased proportionately in all parties but women remained relatively underrepresented in other sectors of the economy.

Although this research does not involve the USA, we used numerous examples of women's position in US politics. Still we find a dilemma in that despite having many favourable opportunities for advancement, US women remain almost at the bottom of the legislative representation scale. Earlier we cited the assertion of Hague et al., (1998) where they claimed the cause was the discrimination of political parties in selecting women. Along with this, another possible explanation could be related to the contagion process. A

specific element of party competition made this happen in New Zealand and Norway where women are so successful in politics and not in other areas. Conversely, US women are successful in professional areas and show poor achievement in politics. While women in all Norwegian parties and the New Zealand Labour Party proved effective in bringing more women into politics due to party competition, no such evidence is found for women in the USA. Although NOW promotes and delivers financial assistance to women candidates, neither Democrats nor Republicans show any competition in promoting women. Initially the women's movement in New Zealand started from the inspiration of the USA and the UK, but to Green MP Sue Kedgley, women's movements in New Zealand were more active than in the USA and the UK. The strength of the women's movement and networks in general and women's groups in individual parties do not appear to be a source of group power in the US. Generally, New Zealand women's greater success lies with a strong, organised women's movement both in and outside party structures and it is particularly applicable to the parliament and Labour Party women. This follows the strategy approach for Nordic countries suggested by Wängnerud (2000). However, with 30.8% numerical critical mass, it is yet to see that women are working for women in New Zealand parliament. But the critical mass is more evident in the Labour Party and its parliamentary caucus in bringing more women's issues and working for women.

So what can we conclude from the above discussion? It is demonstrated for all parties in Norway and for Labour and, since the introduction of MMP, some small parties in New Zealand, that once women proved that voters did not reject them, parties responded to this popular demand. The contagion process, i.e. competition between parties by nominating more women, also proved effective in bringing more women into parliaments. However, this is not always the case. The New Zealand National Party still seems to have barriers for New Zealand women. In Bangladesh women's fronts in every political party do not exercise any decision making power. The parties remain gatekeepers against women and rarely promote women or women's issues. Thus our hypothesis that *'political parties have a prejudice against nominating women as electoral candidates'* has been established as a convincing explanation. It does not hold for the New Zealand Labour Party today or many of the minor parties as well as parties in Norway but existed in the rest and has been supported for all parties in Bangladesh.

We argued in chapter two how some electoral systems can be barriers primarily against participation and ultimately against effectiveness. They can be the sources of power and effectiveness by taking corrective measures to increase women's number. It is demonstrated through our primary research that all women MPs of New Zealand found the FPP electoral system a barrier in the past, but it did not prove to be insuperable. The PR electoral system has been universally considered as 'woman-friendly' in that it can increase women's parliamentary representation. Some researchers such as Rule (1994b) gave absolute credit to the PR system for Scandinavia's high number of women in their parliaments. But how did New Zealand women achieve relatively better results than all other countries using the 'woman-unfriendly' FPP system? It was an 'enigma' to Rule even as early as 1987. However, New Zealand women MPs are not surprised rather they claimed the better results as one of the outcomes of their strategy of hard work. Labour MP Helen Duncan's claim is significant that "the Labour Party...has a quite good reputation for promoting women and a steady improvement in the number of women representatives. I think that has been driven by women really working at it, the women within the Labour Party, women's network, the Women's Council...I don't think it just happened, you have to just keep pushing away to make it happen." A strong women's movement, competition between parties and the proactive nature of the Labour Women's Council had a combined effect in bringing more women into the New Zealand parliament even under FPP. However, the MMP electoral system appears to be more beneficial for New Zealand women. A dramatic increase in Maori, Pacific Islanders, Asian and women's representation is evident due largely to the introduction of MMP. Although the outcome remained stable afterwards, the first election under MMP increased women's representation from 21.2% to 29.2% in 1996.

The above discussion gives an opportunity to assess the merit of the system versus strategy approach for New Zealand by analysing the hypothesis that *'systems rather than strategies are the key to success behind women's significant legislative representation in New Zealand.'* In Wängnerud's (2000) terms, systems are egalitarian culture and the electoral systems of Nordic countries. On the other hand, she categorised quotas in political parties and women's group activities both in and outside parties as strategies. But which one worked best for New Zealand: system or strategy? Apparently it is the combination of both system and strategy. For example, the gradual change of culture helped women to advance

further. A change of electoral system in 1996 was another step in increasing women's number in the parliament. However, it is the strategy adopted by the Labour women that is remarkable. The degree of women's activities both in and outside the party outweighs all others. Thus the hypothesis is less supportive to the system approach.

Rule (1994a, 1994b) has argued that without a PR system, women in the US Congress failed to achieve a high share. But can PR ensure women's representation? While some countries can do better than others under FPP, such as New Zealand, some cannot do better even under PR, such as Italy and Israel. Why is that? In fact, the electoral system is only one mechanism among many and therefore, rather than relying upon a simple and deterministic explanation, it is necessary to understand the interaction of the political system in a comprehensive model. Although PR appears to be woman-friendly, without party initiatives or wider political pressures from the women's movement, few women are selected or elected. Israel, Italy and Greece are exemplary in this. Matland (1998b) proposed that PR may not bring a significant outcome for developing countries, although it appears to be an effective method for Costa Rica. No doubt Bangladesh's FPP system militates against women's entry into the parliament. But there is no guarantee that Bangladeshi women would achieve better representation under PR as all other sources of power present great obstacles for them including the hostile attitudes of political elites and relatively weaker women's organisations. Thus PR is a facilitator rather than a cause of women's better representation.

Among structural sources of power both democracy and a strong economy played a facilitating role for New Zealand and Norwegian women's political advancement. Our hypothesis that the '*socio-economic condition of the state is a crucial component for power and effectiveness*' has been supported for these countries. But it is not a sufficient explanation for Third World countries' poor representation, as Costa Rica and Argentina have both showed significant growth at different times. Thus a better economy is not an indicator of better representation and similarly a poor economy is not an indicator of poor representation. It is a reminder of Dahl's (1971, p. 70) proposition that in some cases the relationship of one to the other is unexplained.

The socio-economic condition of the state is a crucial component of power and effectiveness. It clearly impacts upon other sources of power such as the culture of the state. Not every state can afford to offer free or some loan based conditional education for its citizens but both New Zealand and Norway have this provision. Women MPs' professionalism is an outcome of this. But education, which is an awareness-raising element, is expensive for Bangladeshi women. Therefore, marriage gets priority over education and many parents think educating daughters is useless. Another provision found in New Zealand and Norway, which seems much more attractive, is that states provide money for electoral campaigns. We saw earlier that Bangladeshi women were unable to compete in the monetary game to win the electoral nomination.

The hypothesis that *'democracy plays a facilitating role in women's effective representation'* can be supported for both Norway and New Zealand. However, this model cannot be used as a rule of thumb for other nations because, again, democracy does not, of itself, generate women's effective representation. For example, it is not sufficient for the world's largest democracy, as the USA illustrates by its poor congressional representation of women. Democracy appears to be a pre-requisite for women's effective representation as it helps to remove artificial barriers and smoothes women's social mobility, which is practically, absent in many countries including Bangladesh. In addition to conservative culture, how does democracy affect Bangladeshi women's parliamentary representation? A relatively young democratic regime like Bangladesh is still dependent on its authoritarian past. For example, the military are called on often to maintain law and order. The corrupt and violent nature of politics, the lack of democratic practice in electing party leaders, the parliamentary party chiefs' total control over members' opinions in the House, the disregarding of election promises, the ignoring of the demands of women's organisations, and the brutal nature of the police are a few examples of the limited democracy that is in practice in Bangladesh.

We posed a special caution earlier that we might not answer all questions from a brief comparative study. It is seen that barriers do not equally affect all countries, but they differ from culture to culture. Thus, our earlier suspicion that the single factor explanations cannot be generalised, is demonstrated. For example, it would be over-simplistic to look at only one issue such as 'culture' as a great barrier or enhancer because its impact varies.

With the existence of a lesser form of patriarchy, culture has been less of a barrier to New Zealand and Norwegian women's effectiveness. But for Bangladesh, men have total control of women, and women's identities are determined by men. The overarching rigid patriarchy plays an inhibiting role and influences all other potential sources of women's political participation and effective representation. As we saw in the previous chapter the society, state and political elites all remain consistent in resisting women's upward movement. This attitude is reflected through nomination policies and reserved seat implementation, which are the two sources of women's entry into parliament. Bangladeshi women's lack of numerical and effective parliamentary representation is fairly rooted in the patriarchal society which is also legitimised by religion. No single effective measure is evident for overcoming this barrier.

Although a complex model of the sources of power and effectiveness such as ours may capture most possible factors, yet their impact can vary from state to state. For instance, education and professional occupations are key elements for raising consciousness but can they ensure political effectiveness? While overall professionalism is a key to success for women in New Zealand and Norway, women in the US appear to need specific skill and expertise in the law to enter the Congress. Lack of expertise in technical subjects appear to be a barrier for New Zealand women legislators. While quota provisions proved to be a successful strategy for Norway, it did not work for Bangladeshi women. On the other hand, without any such strategy New Zealand women achieved a significant level of representation.

Do political parties show a prejudice against nominating women? This also varies across nations and sometimes within a nation. In Norway both right and left wing parties are almost equally active in advancing women. In New Zealand, the Labour Party and some small parties are exemplary in nominating women but parties such as the National and New Zealand First still appear to be biased against the nomination of women. But in Bangladesh, irrespective of their partisan nature, political parties remain truly gatekeepers and hostile. Democracy and better economic conditions are equally important in creating the necessary conditions for effective representation. Both of these factors counted positively for New Zealand and Norway and negatively for Bangladesh. However, they do not guarantee effective representation as in the case of the USA.

In addition, as women are not a homogeneous group, variations appear in their personalities. Individually, some may be very effective but not necessarily as women's representatives. Some of them are very assertive and effective but some are not. Some women cannot overcome the stereotypical gender-based issue preference due to different socialisation processes. For this kind of barrier, the above discussion supports the hypothesis that *'specific barriers hinder women's legislative participation and effectiveness'*.

8.2 Are women effective representatives?

How can one legislator be effective? *'Women's effective legislative representation can be assessed according to their ability to exercise power through selective legislative tasks'*. It has already been demonstrated throughout chapters 4-6 that New Zealand women MPs are successful in performing as cabinet ministers in large numbers and irrespective of portfolios they can exercise power. Similar performance is noticed in their select committee assignments. Their speaking ability is well established. Also their national and international reputation is widespread. Through primary research in chapter six, the male MPs' opinions are also noteworthy. Moreover, the researcher's personal observation is counted positively in favour of the other findings.

Generally speaking a representative needs to act for party, constituency and nation. To perform these duties legislators may fall into the categories of trustees or delegates. But what happens to resemblance and mandate theories of representation? Throughout our work we have found that women are 'disadvantaged'; a 'special needs group'; 'vulnerable'; a 'political minority rather than a numerical minority' and so on. To quickly overcome barriers and promote women politically they need special measures. By realising this demand of feminists and women's organisations for 'representation of women by women', we suggested an additional task for the representatives. This representation as a likeness or resemblance seems essential for the fulfilment of democracy. We have added women's issues and causes as an absolute component of representation without discarding their other legislative duties. But in many cases to act for other women, women MPs show issue bias and act stereotypically. Therefore, we posed a question whether these women's

representatives can be called effective enough. However, this type of single-issue legislator is a matter of the past and rare in New Zealand these days. They appeared to be very cautious in this respect and have taken women's issues as part of their work and proved to be multiple issues legislators. Most of them did not recognise women's issues as separate, and acknowledged all issues are women and human issues.

As a disadvantaged group, women need special attention to their advancement, but how many women leaders have acted for women's issues? Except for Norway's Gro Harlem Brundtland, women heads have rarely expressed any particular responsibility for women's issues and causes (Kelber, 1994; Solheim, 2000; Mørkhagen, 2002). Throughout our work we found some women leaders and legislators who deliberately avoided women's issues. An argument can be raised about the most famous women leaders who hated women's issues, Indira Gandhi and Margaret Thatcher. Were they effective? Their publicity came partly from their leadership during wartime and their aggressive policy stances. No doubt individually they were assertive and effective leaders in several areas of legislation. However, they seemed to be less interested in terms of women's representation in politics and parliament and proved less effective in that sense although their symbolic role as women in charge undoubtedly showed what women can do.

Leaders have a moral obligation to protect their own territory, and there is nothing wrong with women initiating war or at least nothing any more wrong than for men. The negative attitudes of Gandhi and Thatcher towards women's causes however, do raise some questions. We saw earlier that Indira Gandhi and Margaret Thatcher made it clear on several occasions during their political careers that women's issues were marginal to them. They rarely promoted women in their cabinets (Haines, 1992; Carras, 1995). Where do they belong in our theoretical perspectives? Both Gandhi and Thatcher competed directly with men and conformed to the conventional political norms by exercising traditional power. Rajoppi's (1993) proposition seems applicable to them. Traditional politics centred on the male model of behaviour, and to cope with this male standard many women subordinated their feminine characteristics such as warmth and empathy. They may have had a fear of deviating from the traditional model of power because this could portray them as unsuitable for the position. Another suggestion of Kishwar (1996a) can be taken into consideration for Indira Gandhi. As women possess a subordinate status in the Indian Sub-

Continent, women leaders feel uncomfortable to be considered merely 'leaders of women'. Therefore, when Betty Boothroyd of UK proposed 'call me madam'; Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Hasina of India and Bangladesh were more interested to be addressed as 'sir'.

Both Gandhi and Thatcher were able to adjust to the prevailing masculine political structure at some cost to their feminine qualities (Zellman, 1976). This particularly applies to Indira Gandhi. However, Kirkpatrick (1974) and Hall (1992) proposed some traits of a successful political woman. These include that the political woman is not necessarily masculine in manner and should not reject traditional female roles and interests. Instead of becoming extremely feminine in beliefs, stable and secure women combined female and male values, which are more desirable to be successful in politics. While some women leaders avoided addressing women's issues, we found many other women leaders and legislators who did not hesitate to raise these issues and were still effective. Texas State Senator Dr Judith Zaffirini; Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder and Barbara B. Kennelly; Speaker of the House of Commons Betty Boothroyd; Elizabeth McCombs, Marilyn Waring, Ann Hercus, Fran Wilde, Katherine O'Regan, Sonja Davies of New Zealand, to name a few, are of this kind. It is clear that once women are effective in their general legislative duties their opinions are acknowledged by their male counterparts. Thus they can be successful in raising women's issues and can be recognised as effective legislators for women. Also to be effective and succeed they do not necessarily have to act like men as Norway's Gro Harlem Brundtland and New Zealand's Helen Clark demonstrated. This discussion answers the questions posed in chapter one, whether (i) women can be effective as general legislative representatives, and (ii) women can be effective as women's representatives.

Another indication of New Zealand women MPs' effectiveness appeared from primary research which showed that although they express preferences for certain issues they do not prioritise women's issues or indeed any sort of issues. They believe in a balancing act. For example, Labour Minister Lianne Dalziel, Marian Hobbs and Ruth Dyson, Alliance Minister Laila Harre, Green MP Sue Kedgley and Alliance MP Dr Liz Gordon care about women's and social welfare issues on the same scale as all other issues. By integrating women's issues as part of their work, women MPs in New Zealand do not appear to act differently from the conventional legislative patterns.

What happens to Bangladeshi leaders and legislators? Too much personal power can make leaders authoritarian, which is not desirable in a democracy. Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia of Bangladesh are categorised as authoritarian because of their excessive exercise of personal power. They also resemble Gandhi and Thatcher in ignoring women's causes and rarely promoting women in politics. The country's prominent women activists have labelled Khaleda Zia as a 'disgrace' to womenfolk. However, these leaders' political rise cannot be compared with Gandhi and Thatcher; rather they are accidental leaders, with no institutional footing in politics, coming to power through the widow's walk. A small minority of other women MPs emulate their party leaders by keeping silence on women's issues.

The above scenario indicates the mandate theory of representation. As each MP is in the parliament because of the political party, parties play the role of gatekeepers and control legislators' parliamentary behaviour by enforcing discipline. For example, the New Zealand Labour Party has a policy that once elected, the members will vote in accordance with decisions of the parliamentary caucus. But how are Labour women so successful in raising women's issues? Do they deviate from party discipline in acting or standing for women? We have seen earlier that Labour's women's policy, in particular the Labour Women's Council and their vigorous campaign for women's advancement as well as the Working Women's Charter all had a positive impact in favour of Labour. Once party men started to realise women's contribution, women faced less resistance in bringing women's issues into the mainstream agendas of the party. During the interviews, Labour Minister Lianne Dalziel and MP Steve Chadwick described how they succeed in convincing and winning the support of their male caucus counterparts regarding issues about women and children. This special technique helps Labour women legislators to be successful in raising women's issues from their party platform. Labour women MPs such as Helen Duncan, Ann Hartley, Ruth Dyson, Dianne Yates, Georgina Beyer, Steve Chadwick and Judy Keall indicated women's collective nature in the Labour Party as one of their strengths. Thus they are effective representatives not only for women but also for their party. Labour women's strength both in the party and caucus structures is the main cause of more women being on Labour's side. This meets the requirement of political effectiveness recommended by Goetz (2001) in chapter one. Labour women demonstrated their ability to use voice to politicise issues of concern to women. We have also credited this as the best

strategy that worked for New Zealand women. The collectivity of Labour women also supports our sub hypothesis that the *'group power is an important basis of an individual power.'*

On the other hand, neither the National Party nor its caucus appeared to be a strong force able to bring more women into the parliament. It was learnt earlier that due to the National women's indifference and avoidance of women's causes and issues some New Zealand women were not attracted to the National Party (McCallum, 1993). Nevertheless, the effect of contagion is also evident in New Zealand during the 1980s. When one party put up a woman candidate in an electorate other parties tended to put up women against her but in the name of merit based nomination, the National Party stayed far behind the Labour Party (Yates, 1992; McLeay, 1993). Although none of the National women MPs acknowledged the allegation of discrimination against women, MPs from other parties do condemn National's bias against women. But why has the National Party not taken any initiative to promote women? Do they recognise that women need special support? It is noteworthy that National MPs tend to believe that New Zealand is an equal society and women have no barriers to overcome as MP Marie Hasler acknowledged: "women and men are equal in the society I believe." Similarly Dr. Lynda Scott asserted that "yes men and women are equal in New Zealand. I believe these days New Zealand women can do whatever they like." Thus National women remain absolutely loyal to the party and cannot be designated as effective representatives for women. Also the lack of any effective initiative on the part of the National Party can be held disproportionally responsible for the supply side problem of women in the parliament.

However, from the perspective of effectiveness in general legislative duties, both Labour and National women of New Zealand have been successful. Women in all parties showed their effectiveness by working in select committees and the cabinet. Both Pakeha and Maori women's speaking ability and overall reputation are also evident. Their male colleagues confirm this. Thus the hypothesis that *'women's effective legislative representation can be assessed according to their ability to exercise power through selective legislative tasks'* is borne out.

8.3 Contribution of the work

Finally, we dealt with two important issues: barriers to ‘participation’ or ‘numerical representation’ and barriers to ‘effective representation’ in legislatures. As long as barriers to participation and effectiveness are interconnected, the techniques for overcoming them must also have a combined impact. No single measure can be effective in isolation and the sources of power and effectiveness do not have equal effects across nations. Almost all of the sources of power assisted New Zealand and Norwegian women to perform effectively. An individual nation’s foundation and women’s demands as well as other institutional and structural elements all have significant impacts. Vigorous women’s movements in both countries are something to be specifically acknowledged as the most successful strategy. In addition, local government experience proved to be one of the possible stepping-stones for women to advance to parliamentary careers both in New Zealand and Norway. However, we posed a question about whether New Zealand women MPs are more powerful and influential than other contemporary women legislators. New Zealand women’s obstacles were no way lower than other societies. Even today’s high achievers and official documents of New Zealand government acknowledged that discrimination remains against equality. Broadly both New Zealand and Norway are similar. Due to the country’s egalitarian image Norwegian women faced less resistance to implement quotas in political parties. Also ‘care politics’ is now integrated into the agendas of every big political party in Norway. Therefore, women have less difficulty in representing party and women. But New Zealand is an unusual case, as women had no assistance from any affirmative action such as quotas and reserved seats. The MMP electoral system is just a new introduction. State interventions are quite rare and the National Party in effect still appears to discriminate against women. For the unusual success of women MPs in New Zealand the tribute should be paid to women themselves and the Labour women in particular who put their effort to not only bringing more women in the parliament but to address women’s issues.

For Bangladeshi women, that ‘barriers are multidimensional and interconnected’ appeared to be true. For instance, culture, religion, education and professionalism, political parties, democracy and socio-economy all have a combined negative impact on women’s political effectiveness. Culturally Bangladeshi women possess a secondary status. Both culture and

religion discourage women's advancement; therefore, few of them go for education and labour market participation. Political parties remain great obstacles. Local government fails to provide stepping-stones to parliament unlike many other countries. Irrespective of background experience, women MPs' uniform distribution in parliamentary select committees is an indication of maintaining tokenism. Reserved seat provision has proved ineffective. Women's social mobility and participation in demonstrations are restricted by undeveloped democratic practices. There are no opportunities for state-funded education and electoral campaigns. What are the effective sources of power for them? Only the familial source appears to be effective and that develops too much personal power, which alone is of limited use in politics.

Numbers alone cannot ensure effectiveness but again, unless a substantial number of women are present in the parliament in different leadership positions it is difficult for them to be effective. Therefore, researchers, those who promote the ideology of 'politics of presence' are primarily concerned about the barriers to participation (Phillips, 1995). In effect, we have found that both New Zealand and Norway's barriers to the representation of women have been surmounted by achieving significant numerical representation in the parliament. Once they have achieved a significant number their effective legislative representation has also been secured. To acquire these goals women had to fight hard and they are still struggling to achieve equal numerical representation. Today, women's leading role in politics represents one of the brighter sides of women's situation in Norway and New Zealand. However, equality has to be seen as a cohesive whole. Although New Zealand and Norwegian women are holding a number of constitutional, elected and executive high positions, concern has been raised from these high achievers and from official documents that equality in society is yet to be achieved. Despite the fact that women make up nearly half the work force, a handful of women are found in leading positions in business and industry. Pay disparity among men and women is the most visible inequality that has been demonstrated for these countries. This reminds us of our earlier suspicion that the 'glass ceiling' still keeps women out of many of the top jobs. On the other hand, Bangladesh is still at the stage of securing participation or numerical representation in parliament and still remains far behind in achieving effective legislative representation. Thus, barriers vary and not all sources of power are equally effective across nations. Education, professional occupations and collective organisations show what can

be achieved in the right circumstances as in New Zealand; Norway illustrates the useful role that can be played by institutional arrangements such as quotas and electoral systems whilst Bangladesh illustrates the dimensions of the barriers that need to be overcome. For all three countries, along with equality women's political participation and effective representation appears to be a continuing battle.

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APPENDIX 'A'

**Perceptions of Female Members of Parliament
Among Male Members of Parliament**

Please ✓ in the box that most closely reflects your experience and views

1. Do you believe that women are
 - ☐ Well represented in parliament?
 - ☐ Moderately represented in parliament?
 - ☐ Underrepresented in parliament?

2. There are 37 female Members of Parliament, about 31% of the seats, yet women comprise 51% of the population. There are fewer female Members of Parliament because:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Women typically have more responsibilities for child rearing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Women tend to be less interested in politics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Women are less likely to present themselves as candidates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Political parties are less likely to nominate women candidates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with these statements about the effectiveness of female Members of Parliament.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Female MPs are more persuasive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs are better at achieving consensus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs receive preferential treatment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs work harder	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs do not work as hard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs are less interested in publicity but are more interested in getting the job done	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs lack seniority	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs have less experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs are less suited to politics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs face discrimination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) _____				

4. To what extent do you agree that the following statements describe female Members of Parliament?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Female MPS are aggressive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Female MPs are assertive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs are emotional	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs are naïve	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs are passive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs are dependable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs are effective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs are accountable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs are responsible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs are confident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) _____				

5. Are the legislative priorities of female MPs significantly different than male MPs?

☐ Yes, female MPs have different legislative priorities than male MPs.

☐ No, female MPs have similar legislative priorities to male MPs.

6. Do you think that female MPs mainly raise and focus on women and children's issues?

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements that suggest reasons why more women are more likely to be placed on social welfare related committees.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Female MPs are more likely to have expertise in these areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs have less experience in other areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The caucus is more likely to impose these issues on female MPs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs are stereotyped with certain issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Male MPs tend to ignore these issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) _____				

8. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements that suggest reasons why women are less likely to be placed on defence, foreign affairs, and finance select committees.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Female MPs are less likely to have expertise in these areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs have more experience in other areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female MPs are less interested in these committees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Male MPs receive preference	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) _____				

9. Do you believe that aggressiveness is:

☐ Essential in politics

☐ Sometimes necessary in politics

- ☐ Not usually necessary in politics
 - ☐ Detrimental in politics
10. How ambitious are the female MPs compared to the male MPs?
- ☐ More ambitious than male MPs
 - ☐ About the same as male MPs
 - ☐ Less ambitious than male MPs
11. Can you identify any barriers for achieving equality between men and women in New Zealand?
-
-
12. What would be your overall rating of women members of parliament?
-
-
13. If you have any additional comments or concerns that will help us better understand your views about being a legislator, please write them in the space below.
-
-

Thank you for your participation. Your comments will help to fulfil my current research requirements. Please send your completed survey in the envelope supplied.